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ON December 8, 1941 President Roosevelt solemnly announced to Congress and the people of the United States that the Empire of Japan infamously invaded American soil and wantonly killed many American citizens during a period when a special envoy of the Emperor of Japan was in Washington to explore the possibilities of peace in the Pacific. The duplicity of the Japanese continued the horrible treachery of the Nazi and Fascist regimes of Germany and Italy. The lines are now firmly and clearly drawn between those who prefer freedom, decency, and reason and those who are ready to slaughter, violate, and wantonly destroy.

The United States, Great Britain, China, and the Dutch East Indies have set themselves, fulfilling the thrusts of their history and traditions, to resist and to break the power of the jungle represented by Germany, Italy, and Japan.

In the fifty years of the existence of this Quarterly, this is the third War it has witnessed. Again it will continue to publish the work of scholars, critics, and poets who, feeling the war intensely, are carrying on their high pursuits, preserving intact the sacred trust committed to democracies to keep open the channels of rich and ennobling communications with the past for the building of a more adequate future. Its patriotism is the patriotism of devotion to American political ideals and institutions, completely committed to the ardours and sacrifices of War and firm conviction that our Cause will and must win.

IN the general re-adjustment of the study of literature in American colleges and universities, some recently-published books have prime significance. The impressive symposium *LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP*, edited by Norman Foerster, is receiving greatest attention. It marks a point of high degree in the debate among literary scholars since the late Irving Babbitt opened it with his well known book, *LETTERS AND LEADERSHIP* in the first decade of this century. Fugitive essays, printed, in this and other reflective periodicals have marked the continuance of the discussion. "Scholarship and Literary Criticism" by Alfred Feuillerat in the *YALE REVIEW* for January, 1925, "Scholarship and the Art of Criticism" by Louis Teeter in *ENGLISH LITERARY HISTORY*, 1938, pp. 173-194; and the series of papers printed in the *Kenyon Review* and the *SOUTHERN REVIEW*, Autumn Issues, 1940, are random indications of an accumulating record of the uneasiness among scholars. "Some of us," wrote Dr. Harry Hayden Clark in the *ENGLISH INSTITUTE ANNUAL* for 1940, (pp. 96-97), "are aware that among the younger men in the profession there has of late developed a profound disillusionment with the aims of research in literary history as they have seen them presented in graduate seminars. . . . Heretical ideas have even seeped into the journals founded as repositories of strictly empirical research in literature. The young scholars have been listening to the voice of I. A. Richards. They have been looking wistfully over the fence where able and learned critics like T. S. Eliot and Allen Tate and John Crowe Ransom are at play."

WHILE scholars at the recent meeting of the Modern Language Association held at Indianapolis the last three days of 1941 were properly engaged in analyzing the contents and discussing the implications of Dr. Norman Foerster's LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP, most of them ignored the even more important issues of THE ENGLISH INSTITUTE ANNUAL for the years 1940 and 1941. The English Institute is an institute for the higher study of the bearing and responsibilities of literary scholarship which, while it assumes the truth of the general directions of Dr. Foerster's crusade, has profited by the enlarging climate of criticism and opinion and proceeds to operate at the point at which the contributors to Dr. Foerster's LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP leaves off.

The English Literary Institute is an assemblage of persons interested in the study of English and American literature and language, meeting at Columbia University in New York City early in September of each year. It met for the first time in September 1940 and later that year published its first ANNUAL under the editorship of the late Carleton Brown of New York University. Among its topics of discussion, collected in the first ANNUAL, were the following essays: "Choosing a Topic for Research", by Carl Van Doren, "The Search for English Literary Documents", by James M. Osborne of Yale University, "The History of Literature and the History of Thought", by Marjorie Nicolson of Columbia University, "The Literature of the Nineteenth Century and the Modern Scholar", by Howard Lowry of Princeton University, "Biography in America", by Townsend Scudder of Swarthmore College, and "Some Problems in Editing Middle English Manuscripts", by MacEdward Leach of the University of Pennsylvania.

The second ENGLISH INSTITUTE ANNUAL (1940) maintained the fine level of the first volume and at the same time preserved its appeal for thoughtful readers who are not specialists but who are interested in serious study of English and American literature and language. Its contents at once engage interest: "Mimesis and Allegory" by W. H. Auden, "The Poem as Organism: Modern Critical Procedure", by Cleanth Brooks, Jr., "Scholarship and Contemporary Literature", by William Tindall; "Literary Forms and Types; or, A Defence of Polonius", by Norman Holmes Pearson; "Periods and Movements in Literary History",

by René Wellek; "The Problem of Greatness in Writing Literary History", by Willard Thorp; "Intellectual History and its Relation to a Balanced Study of American Literature", by Harry Hayden Clark; "The Popular Review and the Scholarly Book", by Ralph Thompson; "Who Uses a Library of Rere Books?" by Randolph G. Adams, "Copyright and Scholarship", by Walter L. Pforzheimer.

Essays of this type indicate a wholesome response to the need for supplement to the restrictedly linguistic and historical types of literary scholarship: they point to a possibility of agreement on attainable—even philosophic—levels which will enrich and make even more valuable the time and effort spent on the less obvious planes of literary study in our institutions of higher learning. The recovery of some scale of values is indicated in the two volumes of the *ENGLISH INSTITUTE ANNUAL* but the prospect of further sessions of the Institute at Columbia University is, if possible, even more engaging, especially in wartime. The *ENGLISH INSTITUTE ANNUAL* is published by the Columbia University Press.

by Althea Bass

TSALI OF THE CHEROKEES

WHOEVER travels in the region of the Great Smoky Mountains (and who does not, now that their green, elusive beauty has been confined within the boundaries of a national park?) is sure to encounter some form of the story of Tsali. Guides give their own oral versions, as they conduct visitors over the trails; white men in charge of groups of Cherokee dancers and archers bring it into their streamlined explanations (sometimes more amazing to the Indians themselves than to their white visitors) of Cherokee history and culture; and every booklet and pamphlet dealing with the region devotes a chapter—usually what might be called a Chamber of Commerce version—to Tsali's sacrifice. Tinkers, both literary and historical, have taken the incident into their hands and turned it out again without any evidence of the touch of the master craftsman. Ever since the autumn of 1838, white men have made and remade their versions of Tsali's story, while the Indians have kept their own counsel in the matter, neither protesting at the white man's errors and inaccuracies nor informing him that the true name of the hero was not specifically Tsali, any more than the true name of all Pullman porters is specifically George.

By white standards, the Tsali of this story was an outlaw for a long time before he became a hero. White men, in their centuries of dealings with the Cherokees, had seldom had the patience or the respect to concern themselves with difficult Cherokee names. "Every man Charley", Cherokee linguists now explain, "if his name was hard for white man to say." And *Charley* in English, became *Tsali* in Cherokee phonetics. The white man's contempt for the Cherokee language became the Cherokees' convenience, early in the nineteenth century, when the white man's greed for land put in jeopardy every Cherokee who clung to his home and his property. Whenever Tsali was wanted, by white military au-

thorities, Tsali proved to be every-Indian-in-general and no Indian in particular.

Now the hero of the story of Tsali, told and re-told in the Great Smoky Mountains to-day, clung to his homeland with unusual persistence, even for a home-loving Cherokee. His name was beautiful—Lawini, each syllable pronounced separately, and with an accent and a rising inflection at the end. When, because he loved his home too much to be driven forth from it by a military detachment, Lawini killed a guard and became an outlaw, he was lost by his fellow-tribesmen under the anonymity of Tsali. And so, till now, he has remained.

Undoubtedly, General Winfield Scott wrote the first account of the Tsali incident. In May, 1838,¹ he had come to the country of the Cherokees, who claimed lands in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and North Carolina as their home, to carry out their enforced removal to lands beyond the Mississippi and "west of Arkansas". Seven thousand troops had been assigned to him, for the removal of what was probably a few more than sixteen thousand Indians, and by early November he had seen the last of the companies of unwilling emigrants start on their westward journey. "No country was ever before so thoroughly swept of its red population—at one operation," wrote Scott to Secretary of War Poinsett;² but nevertheless he left a little final brushing-up to be done by his subordinate Colonel William S. Foster. A few stubborn fugitives, skillful at evading the soldiers and finding food in the mountain fastnesses, were known to be at large. They were to be captured. And the Indian who had made his escape, with that of his little group of family and friends, by plotting an attack on the military guard who had been driving them, must be punished.

Scott's instructions to Colonel Foster were brief and pointed. On November 7, 1838, before he left his headquarters at Athens, Tennessee, he wrote,

You are aware that within a week, on the Little Tennessee, in the mountains of North Carolina, a party of Cherokee

¹May 23, 1838, was the final date for the voluntary removal of the Cherokees under the treaty of December 29, 1835.

²Cited in Elliott, Charles Winslow, WINFIELD SCOTT (New York, Macmillan, 1937), p. 335.

prisoners rose upon the guard commanded by Lieutenant Smith, and killed two of his men, wounding a third.

The individuals guilty of this unprovoked outrage must be shot down; and there is another object demanding equal and immediate attention, viz.: the protection of the white families residing in that region, who are doubtless much alarmed (and may be in great danger) at this most unexpected spirit of hostility evinced by the fugitive Indians about them, by the murderers in question.³

The eagerness of Colonel Foster's leap into the Indian hunt is scandalous. On November 15, he sent General Scott a lengthy account of his efforts, reporting seven detachments—five under commissioned officers and two under-sergeants—appointed to scour a thirty-five mile circle "in pursuit of old Charley and his sons". Bewildered and starved Cherokees to whom Foster had "given promises, on condition of service", aided him.

. . . citizens, soldiers, and Indians are in pursuit, and these mountains can never again be a place of refuge to them. Old Charley and his two sons John and Nan-tay-a-lee Jake are supposed to have separated from the others, Nan-tay-a-lee George and Lowan . . .

. . . I do not believe there are one hundred souls in the country.⁴

With each day's pursuit, the magnitude of the crime Colonel Foster was punishing grew. On November 24th, he reported a victory all but complete.

I consider my mission into the mountains of North Carolina as ended. Of the *twelve* individuals, prisoners, in the power of Lieutenant Smith, (when they rose upon him, and murdered two of his guard, then desperately wounded the third, and violently assaulted him with intent to kill), I have captured *eleven*. Of the five males, three were 'punished' yesterday evening by the Cherokees themselves, in the presence of the 4th regiment of infantry. *One*, from his extreme youth, I have with me, as well as all the females of the party.⁵

On December 3, Colonel Foster had the satisfaction of report-

³EXECUTIVE DOCUMENTS, 25th Congress, 3rd Session. Vol. III, 1838-39. Document No. 109.

⁴IBID.

⁵IBID.

ing his triumph as complete and himself as having left the mountains.

General: In my letter to you of the 24th ultimo, I stated that of the *twelve* murderers, eleven had been taken; and that of the *five* males, three had been executed by the Cherokees themselves, and also that one, from his youth, I had with me as prisoner. I have now to state that old Charley himself was finally captured, and executed by Wa-chu-cha and Euchella, at noon on the 25th ultimo, the day after I marched.*

Undoubtedly, though this is not apparent from his letters, the military strategy which Colonel Foster used against these mountain dwellers was not so much responsible for his success as was the fact that he had "given promises". For he had bargained with the Indians (by a pre-arranged plan of General Scott's) to the effect that, if the actual murderers were surrendered for punishment, the rest of the refugees might remain unmolested in their mountain homes. On the strength of this promise Utsali, the chief of this mountain band, and Wilusdi, an adopted Cherokee who acted as Indian agent, negotiated with the murderers, who then surrendered voluntarily. In his executions, Colonel Foster had taken more than a life for a life; and in his report, he failed to mention the voluntary nature of Tsali's surrender. Still, it was a Cherokee victory. For the little fugitive group of fewer than "one hundred souls" proved to be a band of more than one thousand and whose homes in the Great Smokies had been thus guaranteed to them. They were to become the Eastern Band of Cherokees, still living on the Qualla Reservation in North Carolina. Lawini's plot and his sacrifice had been effectual, although his name did not get into the story even after his death. It remained, safely and anonymously, Tsali's story.

Ten years after its occurrence, the story of Tsali's sacrifice got into literature. Charles Lanman, popular as writer, amateur explorer, and artist, made it the subject of one of his *Letters from the Allegheny Mountains*. Lanman actually wrote this letter from Qualla Town, North Carolina, where he was the guest of the chief Utsali. But the same inaccuracy which made him content himself with *Euchella* as an approximation of the Cherokee chief-

**Ibid.*

tain's name made him satisfied with a weak kind of eloquence in his story. Washington Irving once called Lanman "the picturesque explorer of his country," and he had the reputation of being an excellent raconteur. Perhaps this explains why, in that environment of untamed beauty and with the most reactionary, tradition-loving of all the Cherokees at hand to observe and question, he produced nothing more than "an ornate but somewhat inaccurate account." This at any rate was the estimate James Mooney, that accurate and spiritually penetrating student of the Cherokees long associated with the Bureau of American Ethnology, gave of Lanman's account.

Then came James Mooney's turn to write the story of Tsali. Whatever Mooney wrote about the American Indian, particularly about the Cherokees and the Kiowas, he wrote *con amore*; but enthusiasm and affection were never an excuse for inaccuracy or want of thoroughness on his part. Even during his young boyhood in Richmond, Indiana, and while as a young man he edited and printed the Richmond *Palladium*, he had been drawn to the Indians by an interest so intense that few young journalists working under the different conditions of their profession to-day would understand it. When in 1885, at twenty-four years of age, he went to Washington, it was with the secret hope of going to Brazil to study the Indians there. Fortunately for him, and for all of American posterity interested in its own Indian history and culture, he fell into the clutches of Major J. W. Powell, Director of the Bureau of American Ethnology, and never escaped or wanted to escape, until his death in 1921. Probably no other ethnologist has ever attained his knowledge of the Indian tribes north of Mexico as a whole, and certainly no one has ever approached his knowledge of the Cherokees and the Kiowas. The great body of Cherokee literature, history, and ritual that he learned and then incorporated into his *Myths of the Cherokee* and *Sacred Formulas of the Cherokee* would for the most part be lost, among the Cherokees as well as among white people, except for his diligence in gathering and recording it. Recent ethnologists, checking some of his writings on the Cherokees in the light of newer linguistic

¹DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY, Vol. X, p. 606.

²Bureau of American Ethnology. NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT (1897-98) (Washington, 1900), Part I, p. 158.

methods than his, have never found him inaccurate, and neither scientist nor amateur has ever found him dull. Indeed, he seems never to have realized the virtue of dullness in a scientific report.

Mooney lived among the Cherokees, both in the Indian Territory and in North Carolina, for long periods of time. He and the Indians were *en rapport*, and his faculty of getting on with all of them, even when they themselves were divided into factions, was phenomenal. No shamans ever withheld valuable formulae from Nunda, or "Moon" as they called James Mooney, even though they withheld them from other members of their profession who were their rivals in the occult management of love affairs or hunting expeditions.

Mooney spent the years 1887 and 1888 on the Cherokee Reservation in North Carolina, gathering the material for his *Sacred Formulas*. This was fifty years after the Removal. Yet, though they gave him their account of Tsali's life and death, they withheld even from him the real names of the characters. They might trust an individual white man, like "Moon", but they could not trust the Government in any matter where the Removal was concerned. And "Moon" was admittedly employed by the Government. Even Wasidana, the little boy whom Colonel Foster numbered among the murderers and spared because of his youth, when he talked to Mooney as an old man, seems to have given no hint as to his father's real name. That this distrust is not exaggerated is proved by the statement of Frans M. Albrechts, writing in 1932 of his stay among the Eastern Cherokees while he made a re-study of Mooney's work on the manuscripts of sacred formulae belonging to the Bureau of American Ethnology:

There is quite a remarkable spirit of tribal and social solidarity among the people . . . ; against a white intruder, whether he be a Government official or not, a glacial reserve is observed, and it takes weeks and months in some cases to break down this inhibition against the whites. These people have known abominable treatment and tyrannic oppression at our hands, and they know how to remember. Their only word by which they can refer to a white man is identical with their expression for '(he is) a mean fellow.'

*Bureau of American Ethnology. Bulletin 99 (Washington, 1932), p.8.

One paragraph from Mooney summarizes the story as he learned it from his Cherokee friends and from white men who had had a part in the Removal:

All were not thus submissive. One old man named Tsali, 'Charley,' was seized with his wife, his brother, his three sons and their families. Exasperated at the brutality accorded his wife, who, being unable to travel fast, was prodded with bayonets to hasten her steps, he urged the other men to join with him a dash for liberty. As he spoke in Cherokee the soldiers, although they heard, understood nothing until each warrior suddenly sprang upon the one nearest and endeavored to wrench his gun from him. The attack was so sudden and unexpected that one soldier was killed and the rest fled, while the Indians escaped to the mountains. Hundreds of others, some of them from the various stockades, managed also to escape to the mountains from time to time, where those who did not die of starvation subsisted on roots and wild berries until the hunt was over. Finding it impracticable to secure these fugitives, General Scott finally tendered them a proposition, through [Colonel] W. H. Thomas, their most trusted friend, that if they would surrender Charley and his party for punishment, the rest would be allowed to remain until their case could be adjusted by the government. On hearing of this proposition, Charlie voluntarily came in with his sons, offering himself as a sacrifice for his people. By command of General Scott, Charley, his brother, and the two elder sons were shot near the mouth of Tuckasegee, a detachment of Cherokee prisoners being compelled to do the shooting in order to impress upon the Indians the fact of their utter helplessness. From those fugitives thus permitted to remain originated the present eastern band of Cherokee.¹⁰

Certainly Mooney spared no pains to give a true account of Tsali's sacrifice—true in fact and in spirit as well. But even his account has not satisfied the Eastern Cherokees. These people, for all their reactionary attitude toward the white man's ways and beliefs, are highly intellectual. They value truth, in matters of their tribal history, as much as they value their own security, and truth, to them, is nothing less than every available fact obtainable. Perhaps this is why Gunahita, one of their old and learned men, has now decided to give the story of Tsali as he

¹⁰Bureau of American Ethnology. NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT (1897-98) (Washington, 1900) Part I, p. 131.

heard it from Wasidana, and to include the real names of the principals. Gunahita is probably seventy years old now; he is one of the last of the learned men of his people who knew Wasidana well and often heard him tell of the Removal. Unless he speaks now, with white people everywhere inventing details and adding conclusions to suit themselves, the original narrative may be lost and Lawini's name forgotten.

Long ago (as a young man recently returned from a white school) Gunahita gave much assistance to James Mooney on the sacred formulae of the Cherokees. But when it comes to writing English—not at all like writing Cherokee with its strictly phonetic characters—Gunahita has his difficulties. "If you were sitting near me, I can tell you better than I can write", is his explanation. So, while his oral account is fluent, his written account stumbles; but it is, he asserts, "true history, from Old Man Wasidana, who was the one of who killed one of the Federal Officers." Here is his written account:

. . . The Federal Troops have arrived and at once they built stockades; one built now the village Almond in North Carolina the mouth of Nantahala River and little Tennesse River. Another built somewhere near down Hawessi River.

Now Federal Troops kept busy they came around the Indians' houses, the Indians family not expecting to see the Troops, says 'I came after you folks and you must now go.' If they refuse to go; the officer seized them driven in to the stockade. If the family were eating morning meal, or dinner or supper the officer would seized them without finished and without mercy.

The officers kept gathering together to drive in stockade. Each family left the property. If the person wants to get his things; the officer wouldn't consent.

When the officers got all people gathering together and driven in the stockade Now ready to journey to wards west to cross 'Big River' as they called Mississippi River.

Cherokee Indians old and young; let them out from stockade had been prison many moons.

Now they put their foot on trails to wards west, driven by the Federal Troops with guns, swords, bayonets, and whips. (said Wasidana).

The biggest groups far ahead. There was small group were behind with two officers or guards.

In this group were two men one boy and some women:

Lawini or tsali and the other man was name tsudiguanutsugi. this unknown English name. [It means, Gunahita has explained, a fork-tailed bird such as the swallow, but it has no exact English equivalent. Looking at it, and trying to pronounce it, each syllable separately and yet smoothly as the Cherokees do, one begins to understand the white man's indifference to Cherokee names.] And a boy was Wasidana, Washington, the son of Lawini or tsali. The woman's name Yegini wife of tsali and mother of Wasidana. Other women not given name.

So this woman Yegini had a baby she wished to clean her baby she sat down to clean her baby the Guard whiped her with the whip and prodding to make her walk on faster, so they all party became revenged and got angry, they decided to kill both Guards tsali command to strike one down and killed other one escaped ran to wards where most crowd were reported what happened.

The group started back towards home and went into the woods and went many rough places and hidden themselves in caves under cliffs nobody could find them.

The head of the Troops sent some officers runing after so expecting over taken but they failed; head officer send officer to see Agent William Thomes asked him, If he will consent let his people would go to find tsali's party and captured them. If they captured them, bring them down and have trial them and be punished by his people not the troop.

William Thomes accepted, he commanded to go out search them; the party went to searched them and found them; Tsali surrendered; they brought them before the General Scott's officers to have trial, and decided to be killed. Only two men shot to death by reminder Indian. The boy Washington Wasidana was set free because he was to young.

Lawini and Tsudigwanutsugi were as sacrifice for their loving peoples. The women did not had trial with them.

Now William Thomes, Agent now called the hidden people to come back home. They are now living free as well as those reminder people under the state as citizen.

To those people already had started to journey kept going on many moons before they reached at Indian Territory, but not all; nearly half died before they ended their journey.

Many died with starvation tired, freezing, and sickness, were 'no mercy.'²¹

This heroic story of Lawini, then, is the basis of the Tsali legend

²¹Manuscript by Gunahita.

current to-day. But travellers, unfortunately, will not be likely to come upon so simple a version as this. They are more likely to encounter one of the several pamphlet versions, developed in a kind of perversion of Charles Lanman's ornate but inaccurate manner. Here is the conclusion of one such version:

After her faithful husband and son were shot to death, the old wife and mother hanged herself to a limb and the tree shortly after withered and died!²²

Gunahita, being a man of learning, must particularly deplore such forms of the story as this one. He would recognize the work of a master tinker, if he should come upon it, but his patience does not extend to harmful tinkering. No doubt this is why he has written, with regard to his own account, "Perhaps you have read different History. Just to those Imagination they do not writting correctly Histories."

At any rate, in the interest of historical truth and in honor due an obscure man who died heroically, one might hope that the story of Tsali may hereafter be known as the story of Lawini.

More than this might be hoped, if those concerned were white people rather than the almost invariably unfortunate Indian. It might be hoped that these Eastern Cherokees would be permitted to keep, intact and inviolate, the lands pledged to them on condition of Lawini's sacrifice and known now as the Qualla Boundary. But the proposed Blue Ridge Parkway, a scenic highway connecting the Shenandoah and the Great Smoky Mountains National Parks, cuts through the heart of the Qualla Boundary. Although the Indians have still not given their consent to this invasion of their reservation, every season brings some report of progress made in the completion of the route. Since the Indian Bureau smiles on this progress, recommending "additional legislation", there seems little hope that the route will be diverted. More than seven hundred thousand tourists annually, with their cars, their cameras, and their aggressive superiority, may serve as effectively to disperse these Cherokees as did General Winfield Scott's seven thousand troops to drive out their forebears in 1839.

In that case there is one more hope: that the ghost of Lawini may never cease to haunt the Blue Ridge Parkway.

²²Siler, Margaret, *CHEROKEE INDIAN LORE AND SMOKY MOUNTAIN STORIES* (Printed by Bryson City TIMES, Bryson City, North Carolina, 1938), p. 61.

by George Scarbrough

SON

I should have been there where my father was.
Shame to my heart it is that I was not
Riding the hay-rope high between the eaves
Above the entry floor. It was his lot

Who had a gangling son, though, to be where
The dusty studding crowded at his arms,
Just as his luck for fifty-seven years
Had been to work almost as many farms.

I should have been there when my father fell
Straight to the ground and nothing broke his fall,
Not half-a-mile away between the well
And where he lay against the entry wall

And cried his twisted crying to the men,
Who eased him up and brought him to his bed.
I should have helped them bringing father in,
Instead of crouching terror in the shed.

I should have kept my head and been the man
My age called for and not have taken heel
Away from those who could not understand
The guilt a child may have the sense to feel.

BROTHERS

The quarry pit is light and dark as stone
And cedar make a concave piece of land:
And by a green lime-pool a heifer's bone
Lies neat of joint in troughs of pale lime-sand.

Red briers and silver briers and briers like straw,
Sun-polished in the field, line every shelf
Of naked rock. I told him this who saw
The quarry pit. He never goes himself.

He looked at me with eyes of circled fear,
Of bright chain-fear invoked by old stone mines.
I laughed at him. I thought it deucedly queer
That he remembered how he tripped in vines

And caught himself and hung face-down for hours
In Sewee pit, his hands slashed by the stone
Inside his grip. I told him of the towers
Blue cedars make, of swaths of shining stone.

He would not come to see. He shook his head,
His dark, blue eyes against me, dark with fear
Once of the pit, but now of me instead.
The sky above the quarry pit is clear

And white with sun, the air is white-flint air,
And miles of land are open. Softly lies
The white-flint wind upon white ledges there.
Blue cedars make the color of his eyes

Against the sun-lit walls, against the piled
White quarry stones below the ancient trees—
Blue cedars make the color of his eyes
Fear-darkened eyes. I do not look at these.

The quarry pit is light and dark as stone
And cedar make a concave piece of land:
And by a green lime-pool a heifer's bone
Lies neat of joint in troughs of pale lime-sand.

THOUGHTS ON A DIVIDING LINE

I'll never know just when the last time is,
And when the last slope takes a yellow line
To bring me here, between my farm and his,
To look once at his fields and twice at mine.
Though if I knew the hour would finish me,
I'd sit quite still and call down no alarms,
Counting the seconds left for me to see
The boundary lines of our two steadfast farms.
I'd never shout and lash out at the stone
And turn my hands to blood; I'd never cry
Aloud my fear at having died alone,
Before the hour consigned my heart to die.
I'd only wish the man who is my neighbor
Be here with me to share my final labor.

DANGER

The old road-bed above the white-stone quarry
Is surely one strange place for cutting hay
Deep as the knees and thick as hair. So wary,
I handle my blade and wary I choose my way

Over the white stone slabs that came here with the thunder
Of shaken earth and whipping trees to bed,
Under the plane of rock, the wide, oblique shade under,
A cool compartment for a copperhead.

Wary, I handle my blade and wary I choose the thin,
New stubble where I step, and wary the breath,
Long in the throat, like a fall bird out and in,
Slow with the fear of a monstrous yellow death

Wound in a narrow ring, led by the quiet song
Only the trees will sing above the white-stone shade.
This narrow field will take me doubly long,
But where is the man who would brashly swing this blade?

by George L. White, Jr.

WILLA CATHER

THE great artist has a strength sufficient unto any day, even this day. Willa Cather is such an artist. There is in her novels the genius of permanence. For thirty years or more she has marched down the mind of the world singing a joyous song, a vigorous song about the intellectual frontier. In novel after novel she has described in permanent brilliance the importance of the affirmative, intelligent, individual. She has documented a superior democracy; underlined as strong and as beautiful an ideal for America as any other artist we have possessed. In the quietness of her mind she has resolved that certain truths shall not perish from the earth. In the perfect simplicity of her language she has told her truth.

But the road that has made all the difference to her is now used as a by-pass. She has felt the grass grow, the neglect. "It is for the backward, and by one of their number, that these sketches were written," she prefaced *NOT UNDER FORTY*. The philosophy that created and preserved the intelligent pioneer is now in the museum with the covered wagon. The things Willa Cather has written about are called "old-fashioned" today. The squatter and parasite, not the wandering philosopher, camp at the once deep well of American thought. They sit on ideals and hatch out words. The pioneer tragedies of hunger, failure, and creation are seemingly fled the world. Only the tragedy of indifference survives, only the impotent vocabulary of democracy.

Willa Cather says her own world broke in two about 1922. Not so the world of her novels. It is as strong as ever. The times have not outgrown her, they have only shouted her. She is not "backward", impotent, and feeble. She is as useful as beauty. But, like any self-created thing, she desires to be experienced, not just talked about. Believing that the "qualities of a second-rate writer can easily be defined, but a first-rate writer can only be experienced", she insists upon being experienced. She has

an inward feeling for the dignity of her thought, and an inward responsibility that drives her to make that thought known among men. This dignity has kept her from swinging on all the literary trapezes of her contemporaries. It has set her jaw, deepened her voice, and driven her pen with the uncontrollable power of conviction. She has willed into creation, in the face of granite opposition, her own bright vision of perfection. She has experienced life, created that experience into literature, and published that literature because she has wanted to propagate her world of reason, truth, and beauty.

This restraint, this concern with perfection, has cost her dear. She has alienated the earnest young men of our columnary marketplaces. They desire the new vocabulary, not old words like reason, truth, and beauty. The very people who most appreciate her have emasculated her power by turning her into a precious, academic treasure. She is a "classic". And, sadly, a "classic" is one of those literary anomalies that teachers paw over, everybody praises, students read and discuss, but nobody takes very seriously. Willa Cather is uncomfortably immortal.

It is high time we rescued her. For she can outlive everything but false adulation and library respect. Stupid criticism cannot harm her. She can survive the literary lecturer, the book-of-the-month reader, the smart critic, even the essayist. She can laugh at the conclusion-mongers who say that since she is not interested in sex, society, and socialism, she is not worth reading today. The academicians who measure literature as they do porpoises, by schools, will not mar her with their dull theses. But hardening of the "classic" arteries is difficult to overcome. Respectful unconcern is shelving the vital pertinence of Cather; America cannot live without some of Cather's truth.

What is it that Willa Cather possesses that has assured her of this unimportant immortality: the plain truth seems to be—ideals. Willa Cather writes about moral and intellectual standards for measuring the growth of man. And, apparently, once an author does that America puts him carefully on the library shelf under the caption, "Classics: For Children Only." It appears that a fiction that bothers itself about psychological psychoses, sex suppressions, and political propaganda is considered more valuable today than a fiction that postulates all these prob-

lems and goes behind them to the individual. Writing about a social disease secures more favorable reviews than writing about a spiritual disease.

FROM ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE TO SAPPHIRA AND THE SLAVE GIRL Willa Cather has written of individuals as though they had some divinity about them. She has ignored physical routine for ecstasy, passed over the day after day for the crisis. Environment has not provoked her as much as heredity. She has her characters live wistfully, as though there were something beyond the daily bread. She fills her novels with truths about earth, sky, trees, love, desire, courage, and people. She handles her gifts with humility. Wistfulness, truth, and humility are strange words today. We can understand her when she says that "artistic growth is, more than it is anything else, a refining of the sense of truthfulness". We follow her when she realizes that "knowledge that one hasn't got first hand is a dangerous thing for a writer, it comes too easily." But we are confused when she says that "the stupid believe that to be truthful is easy; only the artist, the great artist, knows how difficult it is." We have assumed the truth to be easy. The more elemental (or elementary) a writer seems to be, the more truth we pretend to find in him. If he cuts life to the core, worm and all, we think him truthful. A photograph is our highest truth. We have shut our eyes to the fact that photography can be a medium of distortion as well as art.

If, as Willa Cather, an author seeks to portray an inner, spiritual, quality of life, we are not interested. We have forgotten that truth has more than exposé in its bag of tricks. Somewhere in the shuffle of American criticism and life we have lost the important realization that "the higher processes of art are all processes of simplification." It is time to rediscover an old nineteenth-century, belle-lettristic, principle that to simplify means to reduce to essentials, to first principles; that simplification implies refining; that an author must sift a number of related ideas through the mind and come out with something of worth before he can be said to have written truthfully of life. One thought, however startling, does not make a novel. If the first rule in how to become a "classic" is to tell the good, as well as the bad, truths (even though they be not told in Gath), then America needs more "classics" of the Willa Cather stamp.

What is the truth of Willa Cather? Her great theme is man, and what he must do to "create" himself. She is in the line of descent with Emerson and Whitman. She is concerned with man as a mind; what man must do to release in himself that mental and spiritual force which offers the most "good" to his world. It makes no difference whether the individual is a painter, a farmer, a writer, a priest, a pianist, an unlabeled human: Thea, practicing out the break in her middle voice, or Alexandra, dispelling the spectre of land-failure, or you. Self-creation is to Willa Cather the first concern of man.

Self-creation means a passionate dissatisfaction with life, a desire to make it perfect, and a permanent realization that man must establish and live up to a high standard of excellence if he would make it perfect. Mr. Bergson, in *O PIONEERS*, felt the need for self-creation when he saw the Nebraska problems of earth and stars. He soon realized that the force that came to him from pursuing his dream for Nebraska made him greater than the sum total of everything else he was. Mr. Bergson, with Matthew Arnold, put to use the best that had been thought and written—in the West. He made his daughter, Alexandra, become the very symbol of the greatness of the Western country because he presented her with a vision of perfection. The Bergsons are in every Willa Cather novel. They have mottoed their lives with an unpopular text: he who would save his life must lose it.

Self-creation further implies, in the Cather sense, self-understanding. Man must know himself. He must weigh his gifts against the gifts of his world. If Americans are really "self-reliant", in the Emerson and Cather sense, they will soon discover that most of their world is made up of illusions—self-formed images that take the sting out of time and place. These illusions may be love, fame, ambition, money, family, war, art, or life itself. If the individual is to achieve that best for his life, and here Willa Cather repeats herself in every novel, the illusion must be destroyed. Godfrey St. Peter, in *THE PROFESSOR'S HOUSE*, learned this fact when he found out that "the complexion of a man's life was largely determined by how well or ill his original self and his nature as modified by sex rubbed on together." Godfrey had to destroy the illusion of family life before he could become the uninhibited scholar.

It is not a popular idea, that illusions are impediments to the development of the mind. We Americans enjoy our traditional illusions. It is difficult to agree with Bishop Latour that "life seemed to him an experience of the Ego, not the Ego itself." It is not exactly pleasant to be Lucy Gayheart and have to strip away every illusion before life can be found. But this act of discovery, this making sure of the reason for existence, Willa Cather says, is more necessary than knowing about wars, pestilence, or social errors. Gerhardt, in *ONE OF OURS*, speaks for Cather when he says, "life was so short that it meant nothing at all unless it were continually reinforced by something that endured; unless the shadows of individual existence came and went against a background that held together." It is this spiritual background that man must discover: come wind, war, or water. Man must pick out from that background the shiny illusions of money, security, and intellectual smugness. He must find the permanent. Become interested not in the times that try men's souls, but the souls that try the times.

The idea of self-creation is a difficult one to understand because it is built upon a number of values that our world has lost. Willa Cather talks about a soul, and psychology won't let us have "souls" now. She postulates ideals, standards, and all *we* know are ideologies and standard oils. She writes about the reasons men live by, the influences that change them for the better, the need for discipline; spiritual things. These things are somewhat lost today.

But the most difficult of all the Cather ideas is the idea of the artist—her solution to the world's ills. Willa Cather divides the world into artist and non-artist. Artists are those who create, who imprison "for a moment, the shining, elusive element which is life itself". Claude Wheeler, Lucy Gayheart, Thea Kronborg, Ray Kennedy, Alexandra Bergson, Tom Outland, Henry Colbert, Paul were artists. Not that they all created a "good" that could be handled or seen or read. But that they created the greatest "good" of all, a mind living up to the top of all its strength. They differed from the non-artists by reason of a choice which they all made. They chose an ideal, a vision of perfection. And regardless of what happened to them, how many illusions they had to destroy, they lived the artistic life.

Bartley Alexander, in *ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE*, Marion Forrester,

in *A LOST LADY*, Emil Bergson and Marie Shabata, in *O PIONEERS* all chose the lesser, the personal good. The result was tragedy. The result is always tragedy when man makes the wrong choice. Willa Cather makes this point very clear. Maybe the artist is just a boy listening to music in Pittsburgh, a youth going through war, a farmer wondering about education, an apothecary proud of his cures, a sculptor shaking off a Kansas community's influence, a Bishop building a cathedral in a desert, a miller with a Bible in his hand. All of these characters got a glimpse of something above them, something desirable, attainable, and necessary.

This something is the driving force for the artist. It is his testament of faith, his belief in permanence. For "every artist makes himself born. It is much harder than the other time and longer." Emerson stated a similar thought in "Self Reliance" when he said, "the power which resided in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried." The artist is born when he becomes aware of all the power of his own experience. The artist as novelist must learn, says Willa Cather, that a novel is "merely a work of imagination in which a writer tries to present the experiences and emotions of a group of people by the light of his own." A sculptor, painter, musician, man finds out exactly the same thing. Self-creation comes from self-discrimination, the ability to experience the real from the false. The "real" is the truth of the artist's own inner experience, the result, as Cather insists, of his continued search for the best.

What has the artist experienced, and what is the value of the artistic mind today? The artist has experienced place. He has not, like Clement Sebastian, in *LUCY GAYHEART*, missed "the deepest of all companionships, a relation with the earth itself, with a country-side and a people." He has rather learned that if such a relationship is long, deliberate, and unconscious it will reward the artist by providing him with all the subject matter he will ever need for his life, and it will reward the man by providing him with all the spiritual sustenance he will need for his life. Place to Willa Cather is a feeling inside. It is, as her Mr. Rosen knew, the deep understanding that all countries were beautiful to him who is beautiful. That the artist carries a country of his own in his mind. As Sapphira reveals, the country of spiritual memory.

"Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also." Willa Cather has set herself this Emersonian task. From Moonstone, Colorado to Quebec; from Sante Fé, New Mexico to New York; from Nebraska to Virginia, she has cried "this is my native land". She has the adaptability of the homeless to any home. Her mind has been receptive to any country because she has trained it to recognize the permanent characteristics of place. Thea Kronberg found the energy for her voice in the Arizona forests. Tom Outland found respect for the beautiful in the valley of the Blue Mesa. Bishop Latour found peace in the arid places of the southwest. Cecile Auclair found pioneer excitement in Canada. In all these experiences the mind of Cather is apparent. She has felt, loved, re-created, then transmitted her feelings. She has recognized the permanent. She is Emerson's artist.

Place means more than scene. It means land, trees, people, life. Out of these tangible things come the intimacies that the artist needs for his creations, and the courage to write his truth. Take the matter of trees. Willa Cather's delight in trees is almost pantheistic. Why? Because of the tree itself, but also because trees suggest character. The tamarack of New Mexico, withered, heat-tossed, but blooming is as essential to an understanding of the permanent quality of *DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP* as are the priests. The old cottonwoods of Nebraska tell far more eloquently of the courageous pioneer than the immigrants of *O PIONEERS* and *MY ANTONIA* do. The grey-black pines of wintered Quebec tell more of loneliness than do Auclair and Cécile. The fruit trees of the Wheelers, of Lucy Gayheart, of the Friar of Acoma; Marion Forrester's grove; Emil and Marie's orchard—these things, more than any literary tricks, reveal man; they are man.

Place, and all it means, takes man in when all the rest of his world forsakes. For when the artist discovers that he possesses "A great many valuable things for which there is no market; in-

stitutions, discriminations, imagination, a whole twilight world of intentions and shadowy beginnings", he learns of the permanence of the ideal. He learns that these market-less things are the only real things. He learns that "nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles". Myra Henshawe, dying in the sunrise; Gerhardt, caressing his war-silenced violin; Ray Kennedy, believing in Thea; Ivar, loving all hurt things. These unmarketable things became triumphs, the triumphs of principles.

This is the value of the artist: to see and to demonstrate to his world the triumph of principles. To hold up a standard of perfection. To keep a young, courageous mind. A mind that forgets the size of the obstacles and remembers only the joy of creating an ideal. A mind that forgets the hardships of opposition, the pain of empty, exposed illusions, and remembers what Willa Cather wishes every man to remember, the unmitigated happiness that comes from creating the highest "good". For art, as Wagner said, "is only a way of remembering youth, and the older we grow the more precious it seems to us, and the more richly we can present that memory". And youth is the time when principles triumphed.

It is this theme, this search for perfection, this faith in unmarketable things that makes Willa Cather the most permanent artist of our age. She is a "classic" because she is permanent. The truth of her is active; her novels are as affirmative as desire. She is a deeply serious writer, traveling a permanent road, writing to an unheeding America the most important credo for salvation of our time. She has underlined the one needed truth for today: that man has a spiritual responsibility to himself and to his world; that that responsibility is to create, regardless of cost, the greatest "good" he can. If he will do this, Willa Cather promises, neither depression, nor war, nor conquest, nor grief, nor immature joy can possibly detract from the everlasting triumph of man's highest principles.

by George R. Coffman

TRAGEDY AND A SENSE OF THE TRAGIC

IN SOME OF ITS ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

AS a prevailing mood and a persisting concept a sense of the tragic, and tragedy, express something timeless in the feelings, observations, and experiences of the human race. The concern of this essay is with their meaning and significance as observed in the nature of Being and the activities of mankind, and as reflected in narrative and dramatic form. To begin with the concept as a literary term in its origin, Aristotle was primarily interested in the integrity of tragedy through its pattern, its definable characteristics, and its effect upon an audience. Consequently, the point of approach and departure he affords us is implicit in the timeless quality of a serious or significant action and the tragic catharsis effected through such action. Much has been written since his day about the purgative function of tragedy as a purifying agent through arousing in the reader or spectator emotions of pity and fear. Our immediate concern, however, is rather with the forces and elements in different periods of civilization that give the tragic and tragedy meaning in life as well as in art for the thoughtful person. To put the question directly, to what extent does a current view of the nature of Being and the prevailing order of things affect one's interpretation of the meaning of inevitable or apparently accidental serious and calamitous events? The ethical implications of this question become more pointed as we approach and enter our own period of civilization.

¹Permission to use passages quoted in this article has been granted by the publishers as follows: Miguel de Unamuno, *THE TRAGIC SENSE OF LIFE IN MEN AND IN PEOPLES* (The Macmillan Company, London, 1926) tr. by J. E. Crawford Fitch; A. C. Bradley, *IDEALS OF RELIGION* (The Macmillan Company, London, 1940); Frank Hurburt O'Hara, *TODAY IN AMERICAN DRAMA* (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1939); George Catlin's review of Aldous Huxley's *AFTER MANY A SUMMER DIES THE SWAN* (*Saturday Review of Literature*, January 27, 1940).

The nature of the physical being of the universe sets the mood for this essay. From the beginning of man as a conscious being to the last syllable of recorded time, those elements which give a sober cast of melancholy to all his days are the brevity and uncertainty of human life and the ineluctability of death. The elegiac poetry of the Greeks, the *carpe diem* of Horatian verse, the *ubi sunt* in the refrain of Villon, the "gather rosebuds while ye may" of Herrick reflect this pagan spirit. Keats, with a rare poignancy lamenting the evanescent quality of beauty—and life—pictures veiled melancholy as having her sovereign shrine in the temple of Delight. Shakespeare epitomizes in his sonnets the Renaissance assurance of immortality through one's children. And George Eliot finds a kindred satisfaction in her wish to join the "choir invisible" of those immortal dead who live again in minds made better by their presence. A pertinent answer for our purposes to all who maintain that such thoughts give satisfaction to the human mind is that of Unamuno in *THE TRAGIC SENSE OF LIFE*: "All this talk of a man surviving in his children or in his works, or in the universal consciousness, is a vague verbiage which satisfies only those who suffer from affective stupidity, and who for the rest, may be persons of a certain cerebral distinction." The death's head with its "memento mori" at the gayest feast and the requiem tones of "ubi sunt" are the most common note of warning to Christians throughout the Middle Ages. Something of its universality in theme and mood is recorded by Bede in the beautiful and well-known story of King Edwin's acceptance of Christianity for Northumbria. One of the chieftains in the council, as will be recalled, symbolized the life of man on this earth as that of a bird that flies out of the darkness into a warm, firelit room to disappear again in a moment into the darkness of the night.

Akin to this is the sense of helplessness or impotency in the presence of forces which, for primitive man, were to be feared, placated, and invoked. Their modern counterpart with a resulting sense of frustration and numbness in the mass of human beings is a matter for later comment. Accompanying this awareness of uncontrollable forces is the traditional belief in a power or a destiny that must be the controller of the Universe and consequently must control the life of every individual. Hence through the centuries from classical paganism, through medieval Chris-

tianity into the Renaissance of humanism there developed as a combination of pagan and Christian conceptions, the hierarchy of a Providence that sees all things and all time in the single instant, a Destiny that decrees order for all that Providence sees before and after, a Fate that represents the decrees in relation to the human race, and a Fortune, the seemingly capricious agent which imposes upon the individual with blind disregard the fated decrees of Destiny. Sequent upon this and again in a timeless and universal sense the meaning of suffering and the attempt to understand the mystery of it forced themselves upon every thoughtful person. Again it is Unamuno who suggests the significance of this:

Little can be hoped from a ruler, for example, who has not at some time or other been preoccupied, even if only confusedly, with the first beginning and the ultimate end of all things, and above all of man, with the "why" of his origin and the "wherefore" of his destiny.

Here we leave what Unamuno calls the tragic sense of life and come to the very heart of tragedy. This leads to a corollary of the above: the conscious development of a theodicy. Today even the thoughtful person can see on the surface of events only confusion and chaos. In the Boethian sense he must prove to his satisfaction, though it may appear only rationalization to others, that there is no evil, that there is an ordered universe, that its Ruler disposes all things for good, and that despite Providence (foreseeing) the Ruler leaves to men freedom of will. The late A. C. Bradley in *IDEALS OF RELIGION* brings this problem up to the present moment. This is in connection with his apologia for a belief in the Infinite: "to understand in detail how evil is essential and what it should look like from the center is beyond us; nor can we tell at all why so much of pain, and again of moral evil should exist in finite experience." The last great apologia for all this is the Renaissance Milton's epic attempt to "justify the ways of God to man"—steeped in a tragic sense of life. And it evokes an unanswered question. To keep the integrity of the idea, tragedy, within the human being and the race, must the individual himself recover or preserve a belief in his worth and dignity in relation to a universe which he comprehends as moral?

In the history of Western civilization there are three pretty definitely marked stages in the history of tragedy, with their philosophical and ethical implications: the Athenian period in Greek civilization, the period of the Renaissance of humanism, and the modern period. Each to a certain extent marks the culmination of an era.

For at least Greek and Renaissance tragedy Farnham in the opening pages of *THE MEDIEVAL HERITAGE OF ELIZABETHAN TRAGEDY* gives the most satisfactory interpretation of the dramatist's intent. The tragic artist is concerned with the mystery of suffering and is trying to probe that mystery in relation to the universe as he conceives it. Tragedy thus conceived is a way of thinking which makes the mystery of suffering the central problem, with an attempt to come to some constructive solution. Man because of a lack of comprehension of the divine order or of an inherent tragic flaw must achieve his salvation through suffering. He preserves his worth and dignity by maintaining his courage within. And he re-establishes harmony with a moral order. Oedipus, under the double burden of the curse of the gods and his conventionally accepted human tragic flaw, endures in Job-like fashion the suffering which is his part as a member of the house of Thebes, and purified he emerges in the end an unbroken spirit. Sophocles with the mystery of the passing of his hero makes him achieve reconciliation with the gods—and thus with the divine order. To turn abruptly from art to life, Socrates, teaching the youth of his day to question superstitions and outmoded beliefs and to think clearly, and accused, tried, imprisoned and put to death because of this, is in a human sense a great tragic figure. But under the aspect of eternity Socrates in this great crisis, as revealed in the *APOLOGY* and *PHAEDO*, surmounts tragedy and its suffering through his clear comprehension of the divine order and his rational harmony with it. What a drama, even for the modern stage, this would make with its possibility of dual interpretation—a human tragedy, or ironic comedy with Socrates the interpreter for the divine order.

One might call the tragedy of Boethius as epitomized in his *CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY* and his death the pagan ethical transition to the Christian divine order of the Catholic Middle Ages. As far as life in this world and the integrity of art were

concerned, tragedy was not a part of the accepted universe. Western civilization was controlled by the Christian concept. There was no question as to an ordered universe and the justice of God. The struggles from a philosophic and ethical—and theological—point of view centered around the question of *how* goodness, justice, and righteousness prevailed—not *whether* they did. But Boethius unjustly imprisoned and facing a terrible death had to emerge through suffering to negate evil, comprehend true happiness above worldly things, and conceive a Providence that yields us individual freedom, provided that we rise above our passions into the realm of reason.

The influence, the heritage, and the traditions which contributed to Elizabethan tragedy as a literary type and as an artistic expression of the Renaissance of humanism have been the subject of such varied and extended discussion and are so well known that only brief comment relative to philosophic and ethical implications is necessary. Suffice it to say that two factors combined with notable consistency to produce the same results. The break with the method of approaching intellectual problems known as scholasticism subordinated final authority and opened up the entire field of human thought for individual speculation. As an accompanying incident to this the authority of the Church was broken and one was free to question the *whether* of the Power outside ourselves as well as the *why*. From the philosophic and ethical point of view, also, the inrush of secular literature caused the thoughtful person to consider his worth as an individual. Both of these tended to fix authority and responsibility within man himself. The individual is thus master of his own destiny, but through the law of causality he has to suffer the consequences of his own acts. The belief in an ordered universe, however, still prevailed. The one who violates a moral law expiates the sin through his suffering or death. The moral order is re-established. The catharsis for the reader or listener is thus effected in part through constructive satisfaction as well as through pity and fear. It is platitudinous but pertinent to indicate that this is the ethical basis for Shakespeare and Milton as artists. The last tragic years of Milton the man assume essential sublimity through his being the protagonist for a Divine order with which mankind by its own will must come into harmony to avoid destruction.

Any attempt to explain in a sentence why there was no great tragedy in the eighteenth century and why it was not a vital concept would be gross oversimplification. The deistic conception of an ordered universe wound up like a clock, and the doctrine of perfectibility, carried into the nineteenth century, certainly were factors. The doubt, stoicism, agnosticism, and pessimism of Arnold, Clough, Swinburne, and Hardy, and the whole mood of the *fin de siècle* suggest the trend toward the tragic spirit which the first World War only accentuated in literary art and philosophic thinking.

But that which caused the passing of the classical tragedy of Shakespeare, as well as of Sophocles, had to come to a creative fruition in the philosophic thought before it could be used by the "poets" as a decorative element. I refer to the sciences. Frank H. O'Hara states the case well:

Pure tragedy of the classical mold was doomed when Galileo's telescope projected question marks across the sky which hitherto had been a tapestry of mythology. From that time the stubborn feet of Science moved toward a neutral Nature which needed no placation from, and made no moral demands upon, mankind.

This thesis had been placed in a cosmic setting over seventy years before O'Hara by a philosophic poet whom we usually associate only with the comic spirit:

On a starr'd night Prince Lucifer uprose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screen'd,
Where sinners hugg'd their spectre of repose.
Poor prey to this hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he lean'd,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careen'd,
Now the black planet shadow'd Arctic snows.
Soaring through wider zones that prick'd his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reach'd a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he look'd, and sank.
Around the ancient track march'd, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

Lucifer, no longer satisfied with the rather petty medieval business of plaguing mankind in revenge for his defeat after his great Revolt, tries to return once more to that upper sphere. But there in the midst of circling planets and stars Meredith makes him ob-

serve the army of unalterable law and sink back into his old subjection.

Thus scientists may discover and explain the operation of laws with which man must be in accord, if he would avoid tragedy; but the tragic sense of life is still there. Man is still in many essential respects as helpless and as frustrated as he was in Greek civilization and art:

We have always had man the pigmy in the presence of a Fate irrevocable, relentless, awe-inspiring. And man has not really changed much; it is only our greater understanding of his moods and manners that has changed a bit. Nor has our idea of Fate really changed. It is only the face of Fate that alters. That face is no longer masked by an oracle; Fate no longer comes down as a god in a machine. Today Fate is the Social Order, the Inequality of Classes, the Economic Cause of a Submerged Fraction. Or he may wear the guise of "Ole Davil Sea" or the Dust Bowl Drought. But whatever we call him, he still operates to defeat man; and as long as the dramatist reflects the maladjustments about him, we will still have tragedies for the stage.

This word *maladjustment* O'Hara regards as the best in our vocabulary to apply to contemporary serious drama. Ibsen and the earlier moderns of England and America have afforded such frequent illustrations that it is well to turn to some more recent creative writers and philosophic thinkers. Eugene O'Neill, for example, has said *THE HAIRY APE* "was a symbol of man who has lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and has not yet acquired in a spiritual way. . . . The subject here is the same ancient one that always was and always will be the subject for drama, and that is man and his struggle with his own fate. The struggle used to be with gods, but is now with himself, his own past, his attempt to belong."

For two centuries now creative writers, philosophers, sociologists, and economists have recorded with constantly accentuated emphasis and often with propagandistic sympathy the lot of the underprivileged. All of this emphasizes the tragic sense of life. But the extremes of sensationalism, for example, in Steinbeck and Faulkner, in Richard Wright's *NATIVE SON*, or in certain aspects of Aldous Huxley's novels suggest a pertinent question. Has the zeal of the reformer to try to shock the comfortable into action,

blending with the reportorial eagerness of the writer for naturalistic accuracy, led to a scientific interest in the study of abnormal cases and a literary fashion for crude horrors *per se*? If this continues, a people jaded to satiety will lose the tragic sense of life and be interested only in a sociological case as representing a particular type of depravity or in the shell of a dead convention that becomes regarded as only sensationally bizarre. One wonders if we are not approaching the end of an era in this aspect of the sociological and literary study of man. It is only a platitude to affirm that the tragic sense of life is a timeless fact in the consciousness of the human race. But do the literary interpreters of this tragic sense of life give artistic and ethical meaning to tragic events for the present generation? Generalizations are easy, and a few illustrations cannot be adequately representative; but three popular or recently popular literary documents at least suggest a trend in this country. *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*, *NATIVE SON*, and *WINTERSET* through their varied presentations of a mal-adjusted world make an appeal for a better social order and for the dignity and worth of the individual. Mio in *WINTERSET*, through Miriamne's love, does find reconciliation within himself and thus at the moment of his death appears to achieve a victory comparable to that of the dying Oedipus. In contrast and in retrospect, however, one sees Mio presented only as a victim of the "arbitrariness of human affairs",² as is the convict in Faulkner's

²Vincent Wall suggests the best *apologia* possible, I think, for Anderson's tragic resolution of the situation for Mio (*THE SEWANEE REVIEW*, Vol. XLIX p. 354):

Esdras, the father of Miriamne, reads the epitaph of the two lovers which is almost a complete statement of Anderson's stoicism:

... this is the glory of earthborn men and women
not to cringe, never to yield, but standing
take defeat implacable and defiant. . . .

... On this star,
in this hard star-adventure, knowing not
what the fires mean to right and left, nor whether
a meaning was intended or presumed,
man can stand up, and look out blind, and say:
in all these turning lights I find no clue
only a masterless night, and in my blood
no certain answer, yet is my mind my own,
yet is my heart a cry towards something dim
in distance, which is higher than I am
and makes me emperor of the endless dark
even in seeking.

OLD MAN RIVER. A moral order here yields to the dust and ashes of 'arbitrariness', whose fruitage for the thoughtful reader or spectator is stoicism, cynicism, pessimism, or numbing despair. Observing this in life or seeing it reflected in literature may purge one's moral being to exhaustion; but such cleansing lacks constructive healing power for the human race. In the immediate present, for example, the hope for all mankind that will give the dignity of a vast epic tragedy to the world holocaust is belief in the ultimate inevitability of a moral order consonant with scientific truth and individual freedom and in the relation of this moral order to something timeless which is more than the individual or collective human will. For such an ethical universe the material world is only an essential symbol. If one may accept George Catlin's interpretation of Aldous Huxley's AFTER MANY A SUMMER DIES THE SWAN, he will find there the work of a creative writer who suggests the way to a comprehension of this spiritual meaning of life and an implied reason for the tragic state of our disordered world:

Huxley, speaking by the voice of Propter [the hero], grasps that there is a structure of the nature of things, spiritual as, also physical, superbly independent of our lusts and wishes, as unconcerned as Spinoza's God about how we feel about It. But in the comprehension of It lies our peace. There also lies the secret of that serene disinterestedness which is the sole pure well, *una sola sancta*, whence flow, not murders and dictatures and wrath, but equity and social justice. Here is to be heard, by those who are willing, a still voice that searches the conscience.

by Winifred Smith

MYSTICS IN THE MODERN THEATRE

"Alles vergängliches
Ist nur ein Gleichnis . . ."

"Un mystique c'est un homme qui veut oublier
quelque chose."

THE return to mysticism, so characteristic a feature of early twentieth century philosophy from Bergson to Jung and of poetry from Yeats and Rilke to Eliot, has nowhere been more variously expressed than in the contemporary drama. Sensitive souls like Strindberg fifty years ago, O'Neill, Claudel and many others today, have sublimated their personal conflicts in symbolic plays which draw both their general ideas and their imagery from theosophy or Platonism or Catholicism, turning away from the restless everyday to promises of hope or certainty of rest, based on one or another intuitive revelation of absolute truth. The desire to lose a tormenting sense of individuality, to merge oneself in a larger entity, whether it be "God's plan" or the Life Force or Nirvana or a *Gemeinschaft*, this desire which seems to be the essence of the impulse toward mysticism, today as always, is undoubtedly one of the results of ever present strain and fatigue. The escape from activity, whether practical or theoretical, into a dream world where every fantastic vision has a meaning which can be discovered through turning its elements into symbols and relating them to the desired goals of self-justification and peace, provides complete satisfaction to many weary and discouraged souls.¹ Freud, himself in later life a part of this throng of seekers notwithstanding his scientific apparatus, would see all these philosophies as merely objectifications of the death-wishes which he believed lie in the subconscious of everyone, repressed as long

¹J. G. Frazer, *THE DYING GOD*, (1911), p. 1. ff.: "When man learned that he must die, more and more he learned . . . to console himself for the brevity and sorrows of life on earth by the hope of a blissful eternity." K. Menninger, in *MAN AGAINST HIMSELF* (1937), gives a Freudian interpretation of the death wish.

as there is strength in the life-impulses, but emerging in times of stress with a compulsive force that drives individuals either to sadism, murder, and war, or to constructing some kind of thought-scheme for reconciling themselves and mankind to inevitable extinction by painting a nimbus of glory over the death's head.

I

In an age of chaos and revolution like our own, it is certainly true that art expresses death-wishes in numerous forms and that among these some of the most interesting are various kinds of symbolic plays. In the popular theatre since 1900, and especially since 1914, such plays have been written in several European languages and with many varied emphases. Glorifications of patriotic, self-sacrificing heroism in war, of which Bernstein's *L'ELEVATION* (1917) was only one of the more popular of many treatments of that theme using the symbolism of the Mass to clothe its story, were published during the years 1914-18, when more realistic war plays were forbidden. Similar pieces of special pleading can easily be found in fascist and communist countries today, for instance in V. Brancati's prize play, *PIAVE* (1932), in which Mussolini appears at the end as savior, assuring the disheartened soldiers that Italy will live because of the immolation of her sons in battle. Robert Sherwood's *THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT* (1939) and Ernest Hemingway's *FIFTH COLUMN* (1939) revive the theme of death made glorious by a crusade for liberty and follow the pattern which for several years the Nazis have been constructing; their large repertory of hymns to glorious death for the Fatherland, death in which individuals lose themselves to find themselves in eternal fame, need not be discussed here, however, for another type of play seems to be more curious and more significant as a modern version of one of the oldest and most recurrent visions of death as the great gate to hope for mankind.

This is the kind of Divine Comedy which Strindberg wrote in his *TO DAMASCUS* (1898-1904) and which has been imitated on a smaller scale by German expressionists, by O'Neill, and by a host of other dramatists. Strindberg's long pilgrimage play, like Dante's poem a dream in three parts, is fundamentally autobiographic, as is all his work, and is a symbolic account of his emer-

gence from the Inferno of semi-madness which he described in 1896-97. Casting aside the attempt to penetrate the secrets of nature through scientific experiment, outgrowing the influences of Rousseau and Nietzsche that had helped determine his earlier ideas, he expressed in the Damascus trilogy an explanation and justification of his sufferings which satisfied his emotional temperament in his later years. Swedenborgian mysticism, built on a foundation of oriental, Platonic, and medieval Christian dualism, provided him with a background of faith and allowed him to construct his *via dolorosa* through Hell and Purgatory as a path toward the salvation which, he managed to convince himself, gave ethical meaning to all his agony. The agony is, unfortunately, a good deal more real and poignant in its expression than the hope of its assuaging; the horrible creatures the suffering Stranger meets along his steep ascent,—the temptress woman, the tempter man, the varied figures of the deadly sins,—haunt and torment him and cannot be forgotten in the somewhat cold sermons of the Confessor, who at the end welcomes the sufferer to the monastery where all thought, all explanations of the universe, are laid aside for the faith which believes that "pain exists in order to make joy more keen", and that shadows offer only proof of the eternal Light.

Again and again in his later plays Strindberg returned to the mood in which, like Shelley and his master, Plato, he saw life like "a dome of many colored glass" staining "the white radiance of Eternity". Through the belief that in this life he was expiating by suffering not his faults only but those of others, he reconciled himself to his troubles and found new and often beautiful forms for the expression of his creed.

Of these forms the pilgrimage pattern* is the one that he used again in *THE DREAM PLAY* and that has appeared very often in the dramatic repertory of the past forty years. Rudolf Steiner, the revered leader of the Anthroposophists, whose mystical religion was formulated from sources similar to those from which Swedenborg and the Theosophists drew their dogmas, Steiner, more philosopher than poet, wrote a four-part *Pilgrim's Progress*

*There is certainly an influence on such plays of the numerous medieval *pèlerinages*, of which Dante's poem is only the most famous.

in Dornach, Switzerland.³ The theme of the whole sequence is the soul's purgation, probation, and initiation into the mysteries of the higher life, from the portal to which it can "pierce the veil and see into the beyond". The faith underlying the whole sequence is again dualistic—the conflict throughout is between "lower" and "higher" powers in man himself and in the cosmos—and is conditioned by a belief in reincarnation. The various figures who appear in the four plays are the merest mouthpieces of doctrine; they have no realistic character at all, in fact the gloss which lists them at the beginning of each text gives them symbolic costumes and frankly describes their meaning as parts of the whole scheme. The principal seeker for salvation is called Johannes, sometimes, in his earlier sceptical phase, Johannes Thomasius; the leader of the sacred group of initiates is Benedictus; the saintly woman is Maria, "prototype of the spirit of Love"; the prophetess is Theodora; in short, most of the names are in themselves descriptive or suggestive.

Not only human beings but other-world "Powers" appear in many scenes. Lucifer and Ahriman, the latter "an influence which seeks to materialize everything", thus "hindering true spiritual growth", the former an "embodiment of the spiritual impulse to action. . . often distorted to bring about self-glorification rather than ambition to do good", these two are the principal forces preventing the human strivers and sufferers from reaching the heights quickly. But angels beckon from above, the spirits of the blessed dead appear in dreams to help and encourage those they loved on earth; glimpses of their past careers, even those who lived three thousand years ago, are vouchsafed to several of the pilgrims in order to show them how to profit from the mistakes made in their earlier incarnations, so that by the end of the fourth play all the sincere novices have been convinced the gates of heaven are open to those in whom the "child soul of simple faith" holds sway. Casting aside the "pernicious" beliefs and methods

³R. Steiner: *FOUR MYSTERY PLAYS*, trans. R. Collison, London, 1925.

The plays are: *THE PORTAL OF INITIATION*, wr. 1910; *THE SOUL'S PROBATION*, wr. 1911; *THE GUARDIAN OF THE THRESHOLD*, wr. 1912; *THE SOUL'S AWAKENING*, wr. 1913. The original German text is now banned in Germany and is almost impossible to find.

of modern science—in Steiner's vocabulary that meant deterministic Darwinism—and leaving behind them also the creeds of the established churches, the Elect, "through tangled paths" are aided to find truth by way of vision and trance and intuition, and truth is defined, as most ascetic mystics have defined it, in absolute terms. Self-forgetfulness, love—eternal, unselfish, a union which death makes perfect—beauty of nature seen as a mirror of the divine, these are some of the aspects of "truth" defined again and again in Steiner's words and expressed in the staging of his plays by rich color and music and rhythmic movement.

To an unbeliever the production of this tetralogy, or any part of it, though interesting for its staging and for its theme, is intolerably tedious; the heavy abstract German verse, monotonously marked by constant repetitions of a few *leit-motifs* such as *Geist* and *Seele*, cannot hold the attention even of people who know the language well, unless they are vitally absorbed by the doctrines presented. For the initiated, however, the plays are full of significance. Presented in the large hall of the Goetheum they are listened to each year as devoutly and as uncritically as is the Mass in a Breton cathedral. One leading Anthroposophist told me that in these plays, which in 1939 I had gone to Dornach to see, Rudolf Steiner had revealed the secrets of salvation he had learned thousands of years ago in the Eleusinian Mysteries of Athens where he had been among the initiates. (Probably Dr. Steiner had been much influenced by the production in Munich in 1907 of Edmond Schuré's reconstruction of an Eleusinian initiation Mystery, for Frau Steiner once remarked that this production had "brought light to many".) Another believer to whom I incautiously expressed some boredom, reproached me for lack of the spiritual vision of which the plays are full, and told me tolerantly that in my next reincarnation he hoped I would choose my parents more wisely, so that I should not be trained to scepticism about the "higher truths" revealed to the Anthroposophists.

All the members of the cult who gather to attend the mysteries obviously live as the earliest Christians must have lived, simple, hard-working, altruistic lives; their headquarters a little oasis of brotherly love and peace in a Europe seething with hatred and fear. Like the members of the Oxford Group, who in 1937 were meeting in much larger numbers at Geneva not far away, the

Anthroposophists did not refuse to recognize the earthly realities of our day but they turned away from them untroubled, sure of the conquering power of eternal love, again like Shelley repeating:

The One remains, the Many change and pass;
Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly.

Looking forward as they do to thousands of years of lives, each one lived on a "higher plane" than the last, each bringing the individual nearer to his final merging into the creative love of the cosmos, they accept the blindness of their fellows as the inevitable result of negative forces in the universe, forces which faith will eventually transform to positive good.⁴

Steiner, like Strindberg in his later work, in these four plays obviously wrestled with himself, earnestly endeavoring to unify an ununified nature. His text is, I think, chiefly interesting as the revelation of an unusually sensitive, suffering mind, nourished on Greek and 19th century German philosophy, revolted by the materialism dominating the thought of his contemporaries and who, after much painful fumbling among the dust heaps of ancient esoteric religions and much struggling to free himself from a sense of sin and strain, at last built a refuge from the remains of past faiths. Everyone who knew Steiner bears witness to his extraordinary personality and its almost hypnotic influence on his disciples. As the memory of his living presence fades, however, the cult he founded will die away, like so many others of its kind, and the plays which are his chief written memorial can hardly do much to preserve it by fixing the attention of the next generation.⁵

⁴Traces of theosophistic beliefs are also to be found in a few French plays of recent date, e. g., in Ph. Fauré-Frémiet's *AMILCAR*, 1926.

⁵Steiner's prose works are nearly all available in English translations. See especially his autobiography, with its interesting account of his early life and education, and his lectures, *ART IN THE LIGHT OF MYSTERY WISDOM*, N. Y., 1935, originally delivered at Dornach in 1914, 1920-23.

A brief account of the 1937 summer performances of some of the plays, illustrated with inadequate pictures, was published in *THEATER DER WELT*, Vol. I, Nos. 5 and 6.

Other discussions of Steiner and his works are to be found in Ed. Schuré, *LE MYSTERE CHRETIEN ET LES MYSTERES ANTIQUES*; E. Hofacker, "R. Steiner's *Mysterien-Dramen*"—*JOUR. ENG. AND GERM. PHIL.*, Jan., 1934, and M. H. Harrison *MODERN RELIGIOUS DRAMA*, (1936), ch. 3.

II

Contemporary mysticism seems to be taking several forms quite different from the theosophistic or anthroposophic. Many of the German expressionists of the 1920's, for instance, strove very hard to find a meaning for this life's torments in visions of a Utopia, either earthly or heavenly, and several of them used the pilgrimage type of plot structure, but their mood was usually very remote from Steiner's and Strindberg's. The first world war had shattered the nerves of these young men and had given to their visions a nightmare color that was darker than anything their predecessors had portrayed. The Valley of Dry Bones of the Old Testament, the medieval Dance of Death, the terrible traditional drama of the Judgment Day, provided imagery for the Waste Lands through which these youths blindly stumbled toward a wavering light they thought they saw at the end of their journey. Ernst Toller's *DIE WANGLUNG* (1918) sketched out a type pattern that was often followed, with variations, in the twenties. The artist hero, Friedrich, forced against his will into the army, goes through a Hell and a Purgatory more terrifying because more actual to us than anything a medieval mind has recorded: skeletons, maimed and suffering children, dying men hanging on barbed wire, aimless flight, starvation, thirst and wounds, all half seen or suffered in a sinister darkness lit by bomb flares to the accompaniment of steady, deafening gunfire, build up an unendurable tension which is not very successfully relaxed or sublimated at the end by the hero's discovery of brotherly love and his cry to his fellows to build a new world through revolution against the old. It is, however, this short final scene that marks most definitely the difference between the expressionistic pilgrimage plays and those of Strindberg and Steiner. Toller, Kaiser, Werfel, and other young dramatists of the 1920's did not think of the saving of their own souls as uniquely important; their personal suffering led them to revolt against their elders and the conventions of their youth, but that revolt did not stop at pillorying or murdering scapegoats and then saving their own souls; it went on to an attempt, though a feeble one, to discover the needs of their generation and to a determination—not only by the Marxists—to build a new world on the ruins of the old.

Fritz von Unruh's ghastly churchyard scene, *EIN GESCHLECHT* (1916) with its weeping mother and her five children, one dead, two about to die, one degenerate madman, one, Dietrich, marked out to be the savior of his people, presents only the first stage in what was intended to be a trilogy on the resurrection theme. The second part of the trilogy, *PLATZ*, (written 1917-20) shows Dietrich's fight with the ghosts of his past; his struggles with the greeds and cruelties of his present world and his turning away from the horrors of revolution to try to make real his vision of ideal love and peace.

What the Germans some fifteen years ago called the "world sorrow of the war" is the most dominant theme of von Unruh's and Toller's work and its expression shows with horrible emphasis how the youngest and most sensitive members of the fighting forces felt during their four years of torture at the front. Naturally enough, they made their sufferings the most prominent features of their plays; the violent acts they had had to commit under orders haunted them and reappeared in their writings, as doubtless in their dreams, in violent incidents.

Paul Kornfeld's grotesquely unbearable *HIMMEL UND HOLLE* (1919) shows death in a variety of forms—a mother strangling her undutiful daughter, a half mad girl stabbing an old woman so that she may be executed with her friend, the beheading of two women who have been stoned by a cruel crowd on their way to their Calvary. A debate on the injustice of human justice is worked into the trial scene toward the end of the play, and at the very end, as the three dead women, who have by their sacrifice redeemed the weak man they love, carry him off with them, presumably to heaven, the chorus, as in *Faust*, sings a short hymn to the salvation of mankind. All of Kornfeld's characters, as Paulsen remarks,⁹ seek redemption, but they are too "demonic", too passion-driven, to find it easily. Their "bleeding hearts", their eternal, unmitigated agonies, drive them along a hideous, stony path toward terrible deeds that they do not consciously will, until they are purged and so made ready for heaven. To Kornfeld, as to Steiner, all men are only "mirrors and shadows of the eternal", their earthly torments are suffered to fit them for a "soul

⁹Paulsen, *EXPRESSIONISMUS UND AKTIVISMUS*, p. 28 f.; cf. A. Soergel, *DICHTUNG UND DICHTER DER ZEIT*, Vol. I., 1925, p. 638 ff.

life" hereafter. "The artist is humanity's conscience", says Kornfeld in an essay defining his beliefs; he must dwell upon the reality of the soul and the unreality of this worldly life until mankind is persuaded it is in essence divine.⁷ "Imitating men", Kornfeld goes on to say, "has nothing to do with representing them", and his practice illustrates his theory. Taking the opera as his model, he writes scenes that are duets or trios or choruses on a theme; "Melody will redeem the world", he says, not political action, which never changes anything—and this belief underlies his satiric comedy, *DER EWIGE TRAUM*, written in the difficult Republican period in Germany (1922) to point out the absurdity of trying to reach Utopia through revolution.

Like Kornfeld, Georg Kaiser refused to face revolution as the gateway to Utopia and, again like him, made a great effort, in his earlier plays at least, to portray this world as a hell or a purgatory through which the living dead search for the reality behind appearance. But Kaiser's chief interest has always been in experimental dramatic form; though German critics call him a *Denkspieler*—one who plays with ideas—he is not a profound or systematic thinker. Somewhat influenced by Shaw and a good deal by Nietzsche, he has realized that there is good drama in ideas and has drawn some good drama out of modern theories about the Life Force, dynamism, and the superman, without being really much concerned with them. In his best plays, the trilogy called *Gas*, and the chronicle of a day in the life of a bank cashier, *FROM MORN TO MIDNIGHT*, he has succeeded in showing his nameless heroes as fighters against forces too strong for them—forces in both nature and human nature—yet he has given these poor creatures a kind of vision that brings some of them victory even in defeat. Their way through the world is a pilgrimage through hell, marked by terrors similar to those described in Strindberg's and Toller's plays. Storms, explosions, trees which turn into skeletons before the eyes of the beholder, thefts, murders, every kind of betrayal, every form of greed, Kaiser loads them all on the backs of his principal characters until readers and spectators long to cry down the curtain. Like all the expression-

⁷In a good many expressionistic plays the influence of Christian ritual is very evident, for instance in the calling of the several scenes "stations", after the Stations of the Cross.

ists he is fond of prison scenes, (cf. especially HOLLE, WEG, ERDE, 1919), of exciting crowd choruses, (MORN TO MIDNIGHT, GAS, Parts I, II) of broken bits of dialog, of all kinds of on-and-off stage noises and of violent color contrasts, all of these devices being used to underline the nightmare quality in life. To him in his youth, as to most of the expressionists, this life is nothing but a dream of terror, "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury."

Kaiser's expressionistic plays—he later wrote many more realistic ones—stress the terror without adding a word of mystical purgation and faith at the end; no hope for the individual soul, such as lightened Strindberg's and Steiner's sufferings, nor faith in a better earth to come gives relief from the tension of the action. That Kaiser, at one time at least, formulated for himself both faith and hope is, however, evidenced by some of his sentences, quoted by W. A. Drake in *CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN WRITERS* (1928) p. 95: "Man emerges from this epoch. . . and strides forward to an epoch in which our chaotic dismemberment and futile activities will seem an impossible fable. . . . Man is that reality which renders all things possible, even himself." Rather a vague pronouncement, perhaps, yet sufficiently explicit to class Kaiser's mysticism with the Utopian faiths which look to man's salvation on this earth rather than in some other sphere. Kaiser is like some of the Marxian dramatists in this respect, and like Shaw in his earlier, pre-1914, phase, when he shared the optimism of the 19th century socialists, who believed that gradual social reforms and a eugenic program would be enough, in a comparatively short time, to make the world a happy place for everyone.

III

Nineteen-fourteen and its consequences shocked all the optimists profoundly and Shaw not least. In his later plays, especially in *HEARTBREAK HOUSE*, begun just before the war, printed in 1919, *ST. JOAN* (1920) and *BACK TO METHUSALEH* (1921) he has shown a tragic sense of life that only those readers who had understood the third act of *MAN AND SUPERMAN* were at all prepared for. In that eloquent third act, there is an arraignment of this world as hell—a recurrent hell, the same yesterday, today, and tomor-

row—which shows the Judgment Day of *HEARTBREAK HOUSE*, and the tragic pilgrimage of Joan toward sainthood as consistent parts of a philosophy that is neither brittle nor superficially optimistic, as some unsympathetic critics, themselves superficial readers, have labelled Shaw's beliefs. But the World War was certainly responsible for the darkened palette.

In *BACK TO METHUSALEH*, to be sure, the dark picture is somewhat lightened by Shaw's returning to the "new religion" which he has said is the leading theme of *MAN AND SUPERMAN*—the gospel of the Life Force, or emergent evolution according to Lamarck, Galton, and Bergson.* The Utopia toward which the Life Force is here willing its way through the efforts of supermen to conquer death, is as far in the future "as thought can reach", but it is not in Heaven or Nirvana, unless the merging of man at the end into absolute thought—whatever that may mean—is regarded as "heaven". Although this long racial pilgrimage play is undoubtedly an attempt to push beyond the despair of *HEARTBREAK HOUSE* through an endeavor to recapture some more youthful and brighter dreams, it is not a successful attempt; its length, its mixture of fantasy and satire on contemporary figures, its tedious debates, especially in Parts III and IV, show a "failure of nerve" comparable to that which drives other mystics toward unconvincing symbolizations of their hopes—hopes somehow always less vivid than their fears. Yet Lilith's hymn to life which closes the play, like Eve's brave words at the beginning, is not an empty form, but an honest assertion of faith:

Of Life only there is no end; and though of its million starry mansions many are empty and many still unbuilt, and though its vast domain is as yet unbearably desert, my seed shall one day fill it and master its matter to its uttermost confines. And for what may be beyond, the eyesight of Lilith is too short. It is enough that there is a beyond."⁹

At the opposite extreme from Shaw's pseudo-scientific mysticism, Claudel and T. S. Eliot (and apparently O'Neill), for a moment at least, have expressed in their several styles a Christian faith of the Anglo or Roman Catholic form. T. S. Eliot is the austere, the most modern and yet the most medieval of the

*Galton regarded eugenics as a modern substitute for religion.

⁹cf. J. B. S. Haldane: "The Last Judgment".

three; his feeling for life as "this our exile", his adoption of Dante's and St. Thomas's belief—"in God's will is our peace"—explains the doctrine which justifies Becket's murder in the cathedral. O'Neill, as R. D. Skinner has recently pointed out,¹⁰ has after a lifetime of struggle with doubt and pain, recently thrown himself at the foot of the Cross and found rest there, though the play in which this action is shown is too feebly sentimental to carry much conviction to its audience.

Paul Claudel's lifetime of dramatic work needs fuller discussion than it can be given here. The beauty of his rhythmical writing, which French critics praise with such enthusiasm, is so great as to carry readers through a mass of debate and lyrical outpourings in the theatre very soporific in effect. Possibly Claudel intends to hypnotize spectators by putting to sleep the everyday recognitions that most drama attempts to stimulate; certainly his longest and next to last play, written over a period of at least six years, is nothing but a dream phantasmagoria on various themes drawn from Catholic dogma faintly colored by history. *LE SOULIER DE SATIN* (2 volumes, 1929, trans. J. O. O'Connor, 1932), is a four-part, loosely-connected pageant of scenes set in sixteenth century Spain, Africa, and South America, covering many years—and presenting a series of phases in the self-denying love of Dona Prouhèze for Don Rodrigue, Viceroy of Spain in the Americas, and their salvation. Their love is lifelong, although of the kind that denies itself earthly satisfaction in order to remain pure for eternity. The lovers meet only three times on earth, and twice for a moment only; the third time, just before the saintly woman's death, for a long dialog about their souls. Dona Prouhèze is married twice, first to an old man, then after his death to a brutal Spaniard, a renegade Christian, who beats and tortures her till her golden hair turns white. Their child resembles Don Rodrigue, for ten years absent in the new world and therefore

¹⁰EUGENE O'NEILL, *A POET'S QUEST* (1935); Skinner undoubtedly exaggerates the autobiographical meaning of much of O'Neill's work, although his discussion of the latest play, *DAYS WITHOUT END*, seems sound.

cf. O. Koischwitz, O'NEILL (1938) for a study of O'Neill's work that is on the whole probably more just than Skinner's critique. To Koischwitz, O'Neill is first and last an experimental dramatist more concerned with startling melodrama than with philosophic problems. Yet O'Neill must be classed with the mystics, whether or not with the saved souls among them, by his own description of his efforts to describe "Life in terms of lives".

only the spiritual father of the little girl. The heroine's tormented life of pain and longing is, of course, a purgatory that not only fits her for heaven, but also leads to Don Rodrigue's conversion and salvation; her daughter takes up her unfinished task and preaches to Rodrigue in season and out, the stony path to paradise. The struggle between sacred and profane love is only one element in this long pilgrimage play. Many scenes are devoted to showing the hollowness of courtly glory and the blessedness of martyrdom, to justifying war against heathen and heretics for the sake of their conversion, to glorification of the saints who appear at intervals in considerable numbers on the stage, to the exposition of the straight and narrow way to salvation—Prouhèze's guardian angel is especially eloquent on this theme—to the condemnation of this world as a vale of tears and misery, and to numerous prayers to the Virgin and the saints.

"My verse is never anything but a cry", Claudel has rightly said. He is as incapable as Steiner of truly dramatic plot and dialog. All his plays, again like Steiner's, are allegories of "human destiny and spiritual salvation"—his own description of *THE SATIN SLIPPER*. To him "every gesture of our bodies, every trembling of our hearts, every movement of our souls, leads to the knowledge and enjoyment of God in Paradise." In other words, all life is nothing but a preparation for death, a death which is the gate to eternal life glimpsed by faith in visions believed to be revelations of its existence. Not logic therefore nor "reality", but Catholic dogma, provides the basis of his work and it is not his choice that his "Mysteries" seem cold and dead and sometimes even pathetically unimportant to those whom his rhythms cannot hypnotize nor his doctrines convince. To others—converts or those ripe for conversion, dreamers themselves, who long for faith in a system of belief that has for centuries given refuge to sinners and sufferers—Claudel is a major prophet as well as a major poet. Like the figures in his plays, he has lost his soul to find it in the beatific vision of a universe united by the love of God, where movement and torment will subside into a peace enduring forever.²¹

²¹M. Raymond, *DE BAUDELAIRE AU SURREALISM* (1939), Ch. IX, has made one of the best studies of Claudel's work and philosophy that I have found. J. Madou's two volumes, *LE DRAME DE P. CLAUDEL* (1936) and *LE GENIE DE P. CLAUDEL* (1933) are fuller studies, from a point of view sympathetic to the poet.

IV

Such to the mystics of today as of yesterday is the meaning of life. They turn their eyes from the chaos around them, so hard to bear, so impossible to understand or to control, and find a kind of sombre, masochistic joy in a dream-world where light and love prevail forever over darkness and pain. Because of unhappy childhood or tormented adolescence their nerves are too near the surface to react healthily to the difficult job of living, so they either retire into a monastery, as Claudel once thought of doing, or they devote themselves, like Dante and Milton, to justifying the ways of God to men in dramas and poems that describe afresh the Stations of the Cross which lead to resurrection and ascension, or to reincarnation and absorption in Nirvana—doctrines that alone seem to them to excuse this world's cruelty and strife.

by S. Raiziss

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Devotion has no ears for querulous city sounds:
A keeper tender of such trust repeats the rounds
And holds the peevish matters of the shifting world
Aloof from dreaming minds, suspended and purely curled
And kind as fleece about the chrysalids of thought:
There rich light and balanced wings are slowly wrought.

Precarious cocoon of consecration, wound
Of thread on thread with intimate zeal,—annul each sound:
Where nothing hears, the tree falls silent to the ground.

by Louis Trenchard More

THE PRIEST AND THE BOY

THE life of a boy has changed amazingly since the time, a half century ago, when The Boy I am describing was growing up. Then, boyhood was regarded as an unavoidable and exasperating interlude between innocent babyhood and responsible maturity. In most American homes a boy was left pretty much to his own devices and the passage of time. Now, he is an object of intense interest to a great army of professional paedologists, who inspect him and observe him as a phenomenon. Elaborate and learned monographs are written on his every phase of mind and body. Psychologists classify him in decennial periods, the most significant of which, and the one to be most avoided, is that called adolescence. When a boy happens to enter that unfortunate age he is so conscious of becoming a psychologic "case" that, in pity of his hapless condition, he is eager to confide to anyone his doubts of ever safely passing out of it. If solicitous care in training will make a noble race the world will some day be full of great men. However that may be, the life of the boy is now very different from what it was.

Education in the public schools which The Boy attended was wretched and dreary enough, but it was at least simpler and not so soft. And I am sure it was easier for him to realize the great and fundamental fact that knowledge is difficult to attain, but somehow worth the effort. The greatest and most serious change, however, has occurred in our attitude towards religion. Calvin and Wesley ruled the country or at least dictated conduct during Sunday. I am not saying that most families were religious or that the Christian ideals were their guide in life. But for those families which sincerely accepted the Calvinistic dogmas, life was stern; for a boy to do one kind deed each day may be sufficient for a Boy Scout, but it was not sufficient when he was thought to be scarcely secure from the ghastly clutch of infant damnation.

The Boy grew up in a family which did thoroughly and honestly

accept the doctrines of Christianity as laid down by John Calvin. And here it is well to correct the impression which will immediately arise in some that this is to be the tale of a forlorn little boy thwarted in the exuberance of his "self-expression", the shibboleth of our soft humanitarians who would change the commandment to read, parents obey your children; and that he was suppressed by the exactions of rigid parents. Such is not the case. He, the youngest of eight children, was irresistibly given a love of good books by precept and by example and, in the evenings, he was often amused by family games. One of his brothers was a veritable genius in inventing games, and another had the gift of story telling so pronounced that, like Tom Sawyer, he could call on all the boys of the neighbourhood to do his chores for him with the promise of a story. And The Boy's parents, with astonishing patience, endured the noise and racket of a house perpetually full of their own children and most of the boys of the neighbourhood. He is thankful even today that his early ideas of self-expression were curbed by his brothers and sisters, and disciplined by his parents. He also is convinced that Calvinism is not a bad foundation for a later super-structure of Anglicanism; he thinks it to be much better than our present indifference to religion and our shocking ignorance of the Scriptures and of the doctrines of Christianity.

During week days, The Boy quite forgot the austerities of Calvin, and in his hours of play the weariness and repression of the school discipline soon wore off. He was a member of a gang, and, as they were generally able to conceal their pranks, much of their energy was directed against the comfort and quiet of the neighbourhood. They had, of course, their code of honour but it consisted chiefly in not molesting the families which were lucky enough to include a member. The code also had the advantage of keeping their own parents in ignorance of what went on. And as The Boy's parents were wise enough to give his companions the freedom of their house and yard, they were treated with especial consideration.

The Boy does not know much about the practices of the Wesleyans but he did realize that John Calvin had a firm grasp on Sundays. The careless freedom of the week ended with a hot bath on Saturday night which seemed to remove not only the soil from

his body but to dissolve his carnal spirit. Sunday clothes, starched collars, and stiff shoes (those were the days before that benefactor of man had invented rights and lefts and to break-in a new pair was torture), repressed his body, while Sunday school and church taxed his endurance. After church came dinner when much food was eaten and his elders—often as many as thirteen or fourteen sat at table—prolonged the ordeal by unintelligible and vehement discussions of the sermon.

Then followed the Sunday afternoons and evenings with none of the usual occupations for The Boy's restless body and mind. No boy could enter our small city yard nor could he, himself, pass through its gates or climb over its fences. The most he could do was to sit on the fence with the two boys who lived next door, and that was not a wholesome pastime. The talk usually consisted in bragging about the superiority of his family or in stories which excited puerile indecency. Oddly enough, probably because it was Sunday, these stories were largely drawn from the Bible. He can even now recall the shock his innocence received when he learned from the older boy next door that the Bible contained stories which,—but why continue the subject?

The one real joy in those long Sunday afternoons was the many, many hours when an older sister read aloud to The Boy and his next older brother. They owe an undying debt to this sister for her tender care and love for them. Not only children's books, but Milton, Shakespeare, the Bible, Southey, and a great variety of other books were fastened in his mind at a very early age. How she was able to make such authors alive and interesting to a boy under ten years of age is a problem he has never been able to solve, but her faculty of exquisite reading must have had much to do with it. She did interest him and the proof is that frequently The Boy's emotion became so unbearable that he stopped the reading with roars and floods of tears. And she awakened his mind so that he vaguely grasped the significance of those great stories and was moved by the flow of the noble English speech as it filled the quiet room.

The contrast between the freedom of his week-day life and the austerity of Sunday produced a curious effect on the mind of The Boy. Tired after a day of school and of active play, by bed-time he became sensitive to his misdeeds. He was bitten

by remorse and with it there was an intense desire to confess his sins and to be forgiven. The wise sympathy of his sister, to whom his confidences were given, comforted him and he fell asleep as one shriven. But, whenever The Boy was left to his own contemplation of Calvin's God, the old terrors swept over him and he identified now this, and now that, of his childish sins with the mysterious and unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost which he had unfortunately discovered in the Bible. It was easy and pleasant to talk to others about, and even to boast of, his ordinary misdeeds, but the conviction of having committed the sin against the Holy Ghost was too awful to be confided to anyone. He can still remember vividly the agony of those secret wrestlings with that problem of evil and its eternal punishment.

The cure of this morbid state of mind, which if persisted in might have had permanent and serious effects, was accomplished by an unusual remedy. The Boy deserted the Christian religion and reverted to pure paganism. Mention has already been made of the ingenuity of his three older brothers in inventing games. He remembers but little of his relations with the two elder brothers, but a great love and companionship bound him to the one who was some five years older than he,—a friendship as pure and as closely knit, I think, as any of the notable friendships of history. So he felt no surprise when his brother, Paul, then probably thirteen years of age, proposed that they should have a new religion of their own. He was of course to be The Priest, and The Boy was to be the congregation. Very likely the adventure began as a new game, involving the fascination of secrecy and the terror of revolt. It may have continued as a game to The Priest, but this new religion held the simple faith of The Boy, and his worship of the Goddess was sincere and fervent.

The name chosen for the Goddess was Khâla, why The Boy never knew except that it was mysterious. The Priest has told him since that he believed Khâla was a character in Thalaba the Destroyer which took his fancy; but neither The Priest nor The Boy is sure there is such a character, and it really is not worth the trouble to look it up. Her temple was a cardboard shoe-box which The Priest secretly altered and fitted to hold the rites and the offerings. The Goddess, herself, was a spirit who had no idol nor image but who resided in the temple.

Each night, before getting into bed, the Temple was placed on a table and the room was made completely dark. Then The Boy kneeled to Khâla and said his prayers while The Priest, austere in his white night clothes, stood near the altar and repeated the service. To each supplication of the devout congregation, *mirabile dictu*, there flashed from the facade of the Temple, in what seemed to the wondering Boy letters of dazzling glory, the fateful word, YES or NO. When the service was over, The Boy went to sleep with the satisfied conscience of the absolution of his sins and all his questioning doubts dispelled.

Each morning, also, The Boy prostrated himself before the altar and asked the Goddess whether his deeds of the day before had met with her approval or not. The method of answer was simple and direct; the petitioner was left in no such doubt as often arose from the ambiguous answers of the Delphic Oracle or from the inspired vaticinations of the Sibyls. No, the religion of Khâla recognised no indeterminate shadings between good and evil, no comforting doctrine of good motives in mitigation of evil deeds. Each fateful decree was announced through the inexorable law of gravitation which knows no sympathy with human desires or frailties. On her altar lay a short rod, whose one end was painted red and the other, blue. After each interrogation, the Priest tossed the rod whirling into the air; if the red end touched the floor first, the deed was evil and The Boy made an oblation; if the blue end fell, The Boy escaped punishment but he had no other reward for his virtue except an inner sentiment of righteousness. The punishment also was simple and direct. For each wrong action or evil word, The Boy desposited into the box, through a slot in its cover, one of his rare pennies or a choice bit of food. From experience, he learned two things which guided his conduct and confirmed his faith in the omniscience of the Goddess. While the sacrificial offerings were of various kinds, it became clear to him that Khâla had an inordinate affection for maple sugar and a generous offering of that delicacy was almost certain to give him a blue record for several days. Thus, The Boy was constantly led to buy or, if a favourable chance offered, to pilfer little round cakes of pure Vermont maple sugar (why, by the way, does the maple sugar of Vermont alone bear the proud label of pure?). The next question was a delicate one; How much

of the sugar dare he nibble before giving the remainder to Khâla who, like Jehovah, was a jealous god?

The other fact learned by experience was that Khâla was especially rigorous in upholding the power, privilege, and sanctity of her priesthood. Just as sure as fate, if The Boy had, by word, been saucy to his brother or had, by deed, failed to run his errands and fulfill his commands, the next morning the red always hit the floor; and contrariwise, meekness and docility lent weight to the blue. Even so little a boy knew that such a consecution of natural events was indicative of the miraculous.

Thus, the behaviour of The Boy, who had often wished to murder his brother and who had refrained from that act only because his long meditations on ways and means could not devise tortures excruciating enough to satisfy his indignation and rage, was softened; and peace reigned in the family household.

Although in later life, The Boy devoted himself to the science of physics and to an enquiry into its mechanistic philosophy, he has never been able, with the memory of Khâla's rod in his mind, to rid himself of the belief that the law of gravitation was subject to her will. Some years ago, such an admission of any uncertainty in natural law would have been regarded as a reflection on the sanity of a physicist or biologist; but now the principle of uncertainty is complacently advanced as the ultimate of Nature so far as we can observe it. Now, Sir Arthur Eddington, a high priest of *Dea Natura*, proclaims to us the weird wonders of the new manifold macrocosm and sweeps the galaxies with his telescope and the vaster invisible spaces with his imagination only to find the universe a mathematical formula, without substance and void. And the microcosm is even worse, the electron has seemingly the disconcerting ability to occupy two positions, or to move in two directions, at the same time. "What we are dragging to light", he says, "as the basis of all phenomena is a scheme of symbols connected by mathematical equations. That is what physical reality boils down to when probed by the methods which a physicist can apply." As a last resort of the perplexed mind, he ventures to hope that, having only symbolic bodies, we may be spiritual realities, and he does so in this profound and lucid manner: "We cannot suppose that the non-material substratum of the physical symbols has elsewhere the

specialised development which we recognise in the substratum of the physical symbols which stand for ourselves." It is but a faint-hearted and stumbling confession, and I fear Sir Arthur is moved only by a sentimental echo of Wordsworth's

The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

At any rate, he bids me hope that Khâla directed the whirling of her sacerdotal rod.

This religion was the most comforting and absorbing one The Boy has ever known. He knew just when he was good and when he was bad, and he knew just how to obtain remission of sins. To be sure, he paid largely in maple sugar and in other delicacies, but he rarely failed to secure a portion for himself before the fateful remainder fell through the sacred opening. In addition, once a month the Priest and the Congregation held high festival at midnight. Their bedroom was carefully sealed, lest through a crack a gleam of light might betray the mysteries. An awful mixture of foods was secreted in the room, and the long weary wait, until midnight sounded from the church bells, was forgotten in the anticipated joys of stealthy secrecy. At the feasts there occurred a miracle which convinced The Boy of the divinity of Khâla, for besides anything else the Priest provided for the feast, the small bits of maple sugar which had been deposited in the Temple were always withdrawn from it in whole cakes. Nor did the suspicion ever enter The Boy's mind that the Priest was merely replacing in a new form what had previously satisfied his appetite for the delicacy.

Khâla and her cult absorbed the two boys for many months and they might have lasted longer if the Priest had not become ambitious to proselytize and to increase his congregation and offerings by inducing the boy next door to become a catechumen. At the following festival the new boy came to spend the night and to learn the ritual. The feast was a rich one, with a mixture of pickles, cake, candy, and other things. But the new boy had eaten largely, too largely, of strawberries and cream for supper, as the Priest and Congregation witnessed with their own eyes later. After vainly trying to quiet the groans of the new

boy, grown-up people had to be called in, and something at least of the mystery was gone. At any rate, the worship of Khâla came to an end on that night, and soon the Goddess and her Temple became merely another of those enterprises begun with fervour and abandoned with childish inconsequence.

It must have been four or five years later when the more sophisticated Boy chanced to see a shabby paste-board box in the bottom of his brother's bureau. With a sudden wave of recollection and with an emotion almost of sacrilege, he opened the box and explored the mysteries of Khâla. Ah me! he discovered that the dazzling light of prophecy was only a tallow candle shining through a sliding piece on the front of the box which had rudely cut in it the words YES and NO. And yet worse, each end of the divining rod had a hole bored in it lengthwise and even then there was a long nail lying nearby which The Boy found could easily be inserted in either end. It was his first and bitterest discovery of the frailty of the Priesthood.

by Edwin Honig

TRADE

Man, majestic and thin,
Reports all beauty lies within;
Extracts the heart and holds it to a neighbor
To learn what hurt's about and all hurt's labor.

Neighbor puts it on awhile,
Puffs and pads it to a style,
Till it turns a red ballooning toy
Silly for the smile of girl and boy.

Man begs it back in pain
But cannot stuff it to again;
So spends his days in growing stout
That it may moan no in but bounce without.

by *Edouard Roditi*

G. A. BORGESE

"Demum sanctus fuit."

VITA SANCTI ALBANI.

GREAT artists or thinkers rarely appear in isolation: they are heralded, surrounded, and followed by constellations of other talents which exhibit striking affinities with theirs, contribute to its development and derive as much from it. A foreigner who knows little English literary history might suppose that Shakespeare was an isolated genius; yet we know how much he derived from other distinguished Elizabethan dramatists who sometimes owed him as much but were often poets also in their own right. The same is true, in the history of painting, of Raphaël and, in that of music, of Mozart; in philosophy too, the work of Plato was heralded and surrounded by the investigations of countless sophists whose opinions have survived only in disconnected fragments.

In our times, a striking example of this cultural phenomenon has been the great flowering of idealistic philosophy and aesthetic speculation in Italy. We generally associate it all with the name of Benedetto Croce, familiar to most students of criticism; and his philosophy has been held in such high esteem that Croce alone was considered worthy of defining and discussing aesthetics in the *ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA*. Yet Croce's work has been, to a great extent, the fruit of his controversies with other Italian writers and scholars who, since the age of romanticism, have all been concerned with similar problems. Carducci, Pascoli, De Sanctis, Gentile, Borgese, Tilgher, Leone Vivante and many others thus represent the several generations which have contributed to that peculiar brand of idealism which we now generally associate with the name of Croce; and many of these writers have, in one way or another, contributed to Croce's philosophy by

criticizing it, correcting it and forcing Croce to correct it while he also corrected their theories.

In modern Italian aesthetics, G. A. Borgese is thus to Croce as, say, Marlowe to Shakespeare, except that Borgese is as "universal" as Croce in that, though Croce has written a *Logic* and worked in many philosophical or historical fields where Borgese has not yet ventured, Borgese has earned a great reputation as poet, novelist, dramatist, and story-writer, in fields of creative art which Croce has neglected. Borgese's aesthetic and critical essays, though less numerous, occupy an important place in the history of contemporary Italian criticism, second only, in some respects, to Croce's. A rapid glance at Borgese's *POETICA DELL' UNITA* is very revealing: the dates of the first appearance of several of these essays, which criticize various statements of Croce, will convince at once that Borgese and Croce have been engaged, ever since 1903, in a long open controversy where Borgese often corrected Croce or forced him to correct himself. And Borgese's corrections are not chance discoveries of isolated inconsistencies in Croce's philosophy; they rather reveal the critic's own consistent philosophy of art, an idealism which, like Croce's, springs from romantic theory but is tempered with a kind of common-sense traditionalism, a gift, which Croce sometimes lacks, for never losing sight of concrete examples to test and illustrate the theories which are being elaborated or discussed.

II

G. A. Borgese was born in 1882, in Polizzi Generosa, a small town of Central Sicily. His father was a lawyer who, like many professional men of the nineteenth-century, was also somewhat of a humanist and a lover of Latin poetry. The family's circumstances were modest and Borgese, at an early age, was separated from his parents and sent to Palermo where he continued his studies, under the guardianship of uncles and aunts. Not yet eighteen, Borgese then left Sicily to pursue his studies at the University of Florence; in due course, he obtained his doctorate and entered upon the hard years of apprenticeship, first in Naples, then in Berlin, finally in Turin. He finally settled in Turin as literary editor of *LA STAMPA*, important liberal daily of the old

idealistic school. Very young, he soon married Maria Freschi, a poetess. They had two children: a boy who is now a painter and writer in Italy, a girl who later accompanied her father in his American exile.

Borgese remained but one year in Turin. In 1910, he was called to teach German literature at the University of Rome where he remained until, in 1917, he obtained a transfer to the University of Milan; there, he again taught German literature until 1926, then aesthetics and history of criticism until 1931. In that year, he came to America as a visitor. During his absence the fascist oath was made compulsory for all Italian University professors; rather than submit to this humiliating curb on academic freedom, Borgese remained in America and became an American citizen in 1938. He has now taught at the University of California, at the New School for Social Research, at Smith College, at the University of Chicago; he appears to his American students as a sort of benevolent *condottiere* who unintentionally scares them at first with his exotic manner and passionate rhetoric, but soon earns their deep affection and gratitude. In 1939, he divorced to marry the youngest daughter of Thomas Mann: two great dynasties of exiled princes of the spirit, Italian and German, were thus joined. Recently, an American-born child, daughter of Borgese, grand-daughter of Thomas Mann, great-niece of Heinrich Mann, niece of Erica, Klaus, and Golo Mann, and of the English poet W. H. Auden, was added to this remarkably gifted and international family.

The emotional influence of German literature, with its romantic emphasis on metaphysics or psychology rather than on form, its overpowering sense of history and of individual destiny, has always been evident in Borgese's writings. Goethe, Hegel, Schopenhauer, even Wagner and Nietzsche, have influenced him as profoundly as any Italian masters, Dante, Croce, De Sanctis, or D'Annunzio. Borgese admits that Goethe and Tolstoy have been his highest ideals in literature and in life; at other times, De Sanctis, Croce, and D'Annunzio have also earned his enthusiastic admiration. During the many years of his teaching, Borgese has always been a prolific creative writer and an active controversial critic of literature, whether contemporary or of the past. His first book, published in 1905, was a HISTORY OF ITALIAN

CRITICISM IN THE ROMANTIC ERA, a masterpiece of research, analysis, and interpretative exposition. As critic in many of the leading Italian journals and newspapers, Borgese has, in the past thirty years, exerted a great influence on all his contemporaries. Many of his articles were collected and reprinted in such books as his three volumes of *LA VITA E IL LIBRO*, which remain an important contribution to the history and criticism of modern European literature. Throughout these many articles and polemics, Borgese never swerves from a loftily romantic conception of literature and of life, a philosophy of art and of behavior which he has inherited from the Golden Age of idealistic liberalism.

The main tendencies of Borgese's aesthetics first emerged from his *HISTORY OF ITALIAN CRITICISM IN THE ROMANTIC ERA* and his early controversies with Benedetto Croce. Borgese did not agree with his master's definitions of the aesthetic or poetic activity as primarily primitive or childlike, or unconscious or intuitive as opposed to conscious or rational knowledge, or free from all ethical beliefs. To Borgese, a Platonist, the good and the true are inseparable in art; he thus became suspicious of the decadent point of view which post-romantic individualism implied when it claimed that art was sheer intuition and must not be judged according to any standards except those of intuitive self-expression.

Borgese wished to consider the arts rather as part of a great organic whole of human endeavor and achievement in which poetry is neither subordinated to philosophy, for instance, nor exalted above such other activities as reason or religion. His critical attention was thus chiefly directed to a study of metaphor and rhythm, of image and structure, those instruments with which, he believes, poet and artist try to grasp universal unity and imitate infinite harmony in terms of the finite. Out of many studies of these aesthetic phenomena, he has gradually evolved a theory whose main theme is that of unity, the unity of the work of art as an organic whole and the unity of the various works of art by one artist as aspects of a potential whole which the artist conceives and seeks to reveal or impose. This philosophy of art is indicated in *POETICA DELL'UNITA*, a collection of earlier essays reprinted in one volume in 1934, and the last of Borgese's works to appear in Italy; several of these es-

says had first appeared, in periodicals, at the time of Borgese's earlier controversies with Croce; one has since been translated into English, revised and published as an *OUTLINE OF A POETICS*;¹ many of the leading ideas of *POETICA DELL' UNITA* can be detected in Borgese's two contributions to the *ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES*, his articles on *PRIMITIVISM* and *ROMANTICISM* which express, for the first time in English, his peculiarly dynamic or vitalistic philosophy of art. The creative genius, according to Borgese, imposes an ideal pattern, conceived by the artist, upon a refractory and unsatisfactory reality; it is a phenomenon of orphic imagination, or a promethean will to improve, to affirm truth and the universal validity of beauty.

Except for a brief period in his youth when he fell under the spell of D'Annunzio, "enchanter pourrissant", while others were turned to swine by Wagner, Barrès, Nietzsche, Borgese has always been loyal to the ethics and politics of liberal-romantic democracy, to the ideals of Mazzini. Towards the end of the war which we still call World War, and in the fruitless peace-making after-years which immediately followed it, he was entrusted, by the Italian government, with various diplomatic missions, official or semi-official, as foreign editor of the *CORRIERE DELLA SERRA*, a position which he held from 1917 to 1934. At the Roman congress of the various nationalities of the expiring Austro-Hungarian empire, held in April 1918, again at an allied conference, in London, in August of the same year, Borgese expressed and propagated, on behalf of his government and partly on his own initiative, ideas which contributed to the Wilsonian doctrine and program but caused some strain between Orlando, who supported these ideas, and Sonnino, the foreign minister who opposed them. A few years later, these very same ideas were repudiated by the new fascist oligarchy; Borgese, as a distinguished survivor of the old liberal élite, was frowned upon at first, then subjected to pressure and threats of direct persecution. Mere attendance at his lectures, which had always been popular, became politically dangerous; some of his former students have since been persecuted for this crime and the ill-starred Eugenio

¹In *POETRY: A MAGAZINE OF VERSE*, Chicago, Dec., Jan., Feb., 1939-40. The original Italian text appeared in the volume: *POETICA DELL' UNITA*, Milan, Treves, 1934.

Colorni, a distinguished professor of philosophy, was accused of antifascism and high treason, three years ago, partly because he had been Borgese's most distinguished pupil.

Exile, whether self-imposed or enforced by circumstances, seemed more and more inevitable for Borgese. Yet it was difficult to abandon all the fruits of almost three decades of great effort and achievement. From 1905 to 1931, Borgese had gradually acquired the position of a leader in Italian art and thought. A bibliography of his Italian publications is truly impressive, in its variety as well as its quantity, in its quality as well as its originality.

For Borgese, in addition to his work as teacher, critic, aesthetician, and politician, all of which he successfully combined by practicing, as politician and publicist, what he preached and taught as critic and educator, has also contributed, as poet and novelist, to his native literature in whose history he already enjoys an enviable position. His first novel, *RUBÉ*, was published in 1921, translated into English in 1923^{*}. It is one of the first, if not the first, of a long line of post-war European novels which deal with the slow collapse of a society where the hero, no longer the super-man of Nietzsche, D'Annunzio or Barrès, appears almost as a tragi-comic and Chaplinesque fool, a sub-human victim of society and history. We are now accustomed to such characters; we have met them in the plays and novels of Pirandello, in the novels of Aldous Huxley, Jean Giraudoux, Italo Svevo, Alberto Moravia, Robert Musil, and Franz Kafka. But in 1921, such types had scarcely yet appeared in modern literature. Proust's great work was still unfinished, its significance not yet clear; Svevo's earlier novels, whose psychology is that of the weakling characters of Flaubert, were already forgotten and his later *LA COSCIENZA DI ZENO* was not yet published, perhaps still unwritten. *RUBÉ*'s influence, especially on such writers as Pirandello or Moravia, is undeniable; but its significance, outside of Italy, has not yet been fully appreciated. In 1922, Borgese collected his scattered poems in a volume which indicates a development of lyrical experience from juvenile anguish to confident maturity. He wrote other novels, *I VIVI E I MORTI*, published in 1923, and

^{*}Harcourt Brace, New York, 1923.

TEMPESTA NEL NULLA, published in 1931; he is also author of three plays, of several collections of short stories which were all reprinted, except for a few which Borgese chose to forget, in *IL PELLEGRINO APPASSIONATO*, published in 1933 and, in Borgese's own words, "most cherished of my imaginative works . . . in which all troublesome experiences reached some graciousness in the levity of a ballad style or in the capriciousness of small piano sonatas". In addition to all this, he published Italian translations of Goethe's *WERTHER* and Adalbert von Chamisso's *PETER SCHLEMIHL*, a study of Goethe which he later revised, and countless other works of criticism, literary history, and more ephemeral journalism.

III

In these twenty-five years of intense activity, Borgese had profoundly modified Croce's thought by forcing him, in dialectical controversies, to restate his position again and again; he had provided modern Italian literature with a new type of fictional character, helpless RUBÉ; and he had acquired the reputation of being Italy's leading literary critic, one of its leading imaginative writers and greatest teachers. All this, in 1931, he abandoned to start afresh in America, where his name and work were known only to a few students of Italian.

Gradually and, at first, almost unconsciously, Borgese now began to express himself in English. He published a few tentative scattered essays, book-reviews, articles. Then, in 1937, *GOLIATH, THE MARCH OF FASCISM*¹ suddenly introduced a new American writer to American readers. Kenneth Burke has said that *GOLIATH* is constructed like Dante's *INFERNO*: Borgese introduces the reader to the political and intellectual history of Italy through a series of ever more infernal circles in which the great imperial dream of resurrecting Rome appears more and more unbelievably evil until we finally reach Mussolini himself, as Satan, with Croce and D'Annunzio, instead of Brutus and Cassius, in his foul jaws. Another interpretation of D'Annunzio's status is also possible. In 1909, Borgese published his first study of D'Annunzio, placing him high in the heaven of Italian litera-

¹Revised fourth edition, Viking Press, New York, 1938.

ture; in 1931, a revised edition of this essay appeared, reducing D'Annunzio to a sort of critical Purgatorio; in *Goliath*, D'Annunzio appears at last in his true light, as one of the fiendish instigators of fascism.

Italian critics have bitterly protested that Borgese is a traitor, that he confuses Italy with fascism, and attacks both unmercifully. Fascism has identified itself so completely with Italy that it now accuses every antifascist, who may strike the shield while aiming at the man, of high treason. But man has been endowed with the knowledge of good and evil; he does not owe to his nation the same biological and material allegiance as the wolf to the pack or the savage to the tribe. If a nation betrays the individual's high ideal, he is morally free to follow his own conscience, to tread the path of preferred exile and to discover elective affinities with some distant America. Since *GOLIATH*, Borgese has published several important essays in English: *POLITICAL CREEDS AND MACHIAVELLIAN HERESY*¹ is perhaps the most significant, a passionate refutation of all "pure politics" which scuttle ethics and proclaim that ends justify means. He is now writing, in English, a long dramatic poem about the Conquistadors of Mexico, which Roger Sessions will set to music as an opera. And he has just published a brief political credo, *THE CITY OF MAN*², in collaboration with several distinguished col-

¹In *THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR*, New York, Winter 1939-40. Borgese's other works which have been translated or written in English now include, in addition to all these and to the articles on PRIMITIVISM and ROMANTICISM in the *ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES*, the following essays and articles: PETRONIUS (London, *THE QUARTER*, no. 4, 1939), THE INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF FASCISM (New York, *SOCIAL RESEARCH*, no. 4 1934), ON DANTE CRITICISM (Cambridge, Mass., Dante Society, 1936), CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN LITERATURE (University of Oklahoma, Books Abroad, Summer 1937), THE WRATH OF DANTE, (*SPECULUM* XII, Cambridge, Mass., 1938), THE RISE AND DECLINE OF BENITO MUSSOLINI (*LIFE* MAGAZINE, Oct. 10th, 1938), PIUS XII AND THE AXIS (*THE NATION*, March 11th, 1939), SIX KINGS (*ATLANTIC MONTHLY*, Sept., 1939), CULTURE IN EXILE (*Twice a Year*, New York, Fall-Winter, 1939), THE ESSENCE OF FASCISM (*UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO MAGAZINE*, Dec., 1939.)

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²*THE CITY OF MAN, A DECLARATION ON WORLD DEMOCRACY*, New York, Viking Press, 1941.

leagues: Herbert Agar, Frank Aydelotte, Hermann Broch, Van Wyck Brooks, Ada L. Comstock, William Yandell Elliott, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Christian Gauss, Oscar Jászi, Alvin Johnson, Hans Kohn, Thomas Mann, Lewis Mumford, William Allan Neilson, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Gaetano Salvemini.

THE CITY OF MAN reaffirms all those vital ideals of ancient humanism, Christianity, and modern socialism about which we all know that we should agree but which we have somehow failed to achieve, so far, and still do not know how to achieve. It has all the strength and weakness of romantic-idealistic philosophy at its best: evangelical in its powerful affirmation that man is able to be rational and become perfect, it yet neglects to propose any ways or means whereby we may collectively achieve this perfection. The evil which Borgeese and his friends strive to combat lies, alas, both in the structure of the political community and in the structure of the individual human character. Politically, it is far easier to influence the community to accept something evil, disguised as something good, than something absolutely good: our whole technique of politics has been evolved to allow the triumph of oligarchies which are interested in power and success rather than in ethical principles. And, as individuals, men accept compromises too gladly, are too easily content with immediate personal satisfactions rather than with general good. Man is selfish, foolish, and unkind; and the City of Man can be achieved only if a disinterested minority of pure philosophers borrows the evil techniques of politics to obtain that power which alone will allow them to do good, or if the whole of mankind, in some universal and radical Pentecost, can be educated overnight to be unselfish, wise, and kind. But even philosophers can err and the Platonic republic is almost certain to degenerate from its Leninistic to its Stalinistic ages, from its pastoral perfection to its depraved papacy; and we have little reason to hope for our proposed Pentecost. Discussing principles on which we all agree, the CITY OF MAN constructs an Utopia *in vacuo* and then falls between the two stools: after reading it, the philosopher still does not know how to achieve the ideal state, and the common man is still as foolish and sinful. Saint Augustine, believing that man was more foolish or sinful than wise or good, was also more practical, in his CITY OF GOD, both as political

theorist and as psychologist; he did not overlook what romantic-idealists, in their belief that man is fundamentally good, must necessarily neglect. But even if the absolutely good state which Borgese describes and proposes can never be achieved, the CITY OF MAN yet has its value, from an Augustinian point of view, as an ideal of perfection towards which mankind can be stimulated by study and discussion; for to strive, if only to achieve a faint and relative imitation of an absolute perfection, is still better than not to strive; and Cardinal Newman, greatest of modern Augustinians, has observed that "not failure, but low aim, is criminal". Sanctity and perfection are within the reach of only the very few, though all can profit by seeking them; and the CITY OF MAN, like the CITY OF GOD or Saint-Simon's ideal republic, requires a community of saints amongst whom there is no possibility of sin, just as Plato's REPUBLIC requires an élite of philosophers who are incapable of error. It is perhaps significant that all the authors of the CITY OF MAN are artists or educators at the University level, not one of them a practical politician or a psychoanalyst. For a politician would know how impossible it is to achieve such a program in any given political community; and a psychoanalyst would know how few individuals are mature enough to live in a "good society", how many are still too primitive and only fit to adjust themselves to our present breeding-ground of rapists, neurotics, fascists, and screwballs. Despising political means, which are all more or less Machiavellian and evil, Borgese has restricted his study to ideal ends which can be achieved by no possible means.

IV

Other writers, in other ages, have shifted from their native tongue to the language of a foreign nation. Orientals such as Philo Judaeus, in classical antiquity, wrote in Greek or in Latin; in the Middle Ages, all Western Europeans wrote Latin, many early Italian poets expressed themselves in French or Provencal. Later, our own great Milton wrote Italian sonnets, Beckford wrote Vathek in French, Heine wrote some of his best prose in French, Oscar Wilde his SALOME, countless Greeks, Cubans, Americans, Rumanians, such as Moréas, Heredia, Stuart Mer-

rill, Julien Green, Anna deNoailles, have been among the more important French writers of the last sixty years. Borgese's shift, from Italian to English, is no rare linguistic phenomenon.

Yet this shift has a certain historical significance. Every literature, as its traditions become established, seems to develop around two or three centers, great writers who have fixed not only the pattern of a literature's forms, genres, and style, but also the types of experience and behavior of later writers. Homer and Sophocles thus remained models of literary behavior in all those literatures which derived their cultural patterns from classical antiquity: there is, at times, something consciously Homeric in Milton's blindness, and there is a cheap mimicry of the Greek bard's infirmity in the legend of Pseudo-Ossian, blind "Homer of the North". The perfect equilibrium of genius, which the Greeks admired in Sophocles, remains an ideal of the Renaissance and of neo-classical humanism. Goethe later proposed the ideal of the universal man which Wagner, then Hauptmann, and Thomas Mann, have tried to repeat; and there is something of Goethe-worship in the cult which nineteenth-century England and America, influenced by German-romantic theories of genius, suddenly devoted to Shakespeare so that Stratford-on-Avon became a sort of Weimar or a Bayreuth.

Borgese has suggested that the pattern of Italian literature is that of political frustration and exile, two themes which recur throughout the lives of all great Italian writers and provide the main arguments of Borgese's *GOLIATH*. Dante set this pattern: even D'Annunzio, seeking refuge in Paris from his Roman creditors, interpreted his quick get-away as political exile. Plato and Ovid had indeed suffered exile, perhaps political, long before Dante; but they did not mold this purely personal experience into something of great national significance. Dante's exile was indeed so bitter to him that he infects the wanderings of his Sordello with a similar bitterness. Throughout the struggles of Renaissance Italy, of the Austrian domination, of the Risorgimento and now of fascism, this theme of political frustration and exile remains central in Italian literature: Petrarch's enthusiasm for Cola di Rienzo, Machiavelli's bitter disappointment, Tasso's hopes of a crusade to regenerate Italy and Christianity, even Metastasio's languishing in Vienna, then the elegant wanderings

of Alfieri, the bitterness of Foscolo and Leopardi, the many exiled friends of Mazzini. Now that fascism falsely identifies itself with Italy so as to forbid any expression of disagreement in Italian, Borgese remains, writing as he does in English, more true to Italian tradition than all his former colleagues who now "patriotically" betray their nation's traditions and ideals and submit to Mussolini and Hitler.

by Edwin Honig

HORSE

He stands by water calm
as an early summer melon
grown to bobbing head.

To drink, not a moment's job
of played conceit lazy
in the head's reflection,

but the good draught
long as all life flowing
through granite teeth

through miles of hot canals
past islands dark and struck aloud:
a tide of whispering embraces,

a red corpuscle sea,
to one world-wide tail
lassoing the air.

by Eugene M. Kayden

CONTEMPORARY TRIOLETS

BUSINESS APPEASEMENT

Scrap and copper for Japan,
China may go hang or die!
Credits buy as credits can
Scrap and copper for Japan.
Years ago the war began;
China's poor, too poor to buy
Scrap and copper, like Japan,—
China may go hang or die.

CHINA CRUCIFIED

Bombers drone the death of man,
(Master Jesus, do you care?)
Christian men sell to Japan
Bombers droning death to man.
Long ago the assault began—
China hears in her despair
Bombers droning death to man.
(Master Jesus! Do you care!)

EVIL BLOOD

On five continents at war
Blood has ancient fears to lay.
From the Thames to Singapore
On five continents at war,
Huns of lust, with cries to Thor,
Grant to evil blood its way.
On five continents at war
Blood has ancient fears to lay.

IN DAYS OF HESITATION

And what are we to do, my son?
The dream is fallen to the ground!
Cry do cry do and nothing done
But what are we to do, my son!
And where are we to go, my son?
(A drum begins a dull dull sound)
And what are we to do, my son,
When dreams lie fallen on the ground?

TO THE WOMAN'S CLUB

When little feet go bare, go bare,
And little bodies cry for milk,
What is the answer? Whose affair,
When little feet go bare, go bare
In ways of hunger and despair?
Dear ladies, have you joy in silk,
When little feet go bare, go bare,
And little bodies cry for milk?

THE SIXTEEN-INCH GUN

Ten thousand loaves of new-sweet bread,
The bread of men,—one flaming shot!
Each time it roars, the gun is fed
Ten thousand loaves of new-sweet bread.
Did HE say "give ye them"—hot lead,
Not bread, "to eat"? Is death their lot?
Ten thousand loaves of new-sweet bread,
The bread of men,—one flaming shot!

MANHATTAN SKYLINE

As blossoms white, bricks quiver in light,
As blossoms white of the apple:
Wing on wing, sky-going, poised for a flight,
As blossoms white, bricks quiver in light.
Walls rise to the sky from the pit of night
As tapers alight in a chapel. . . .
As blossoms white, bricks quiver in light,
As blossoms white of the apple.

CONFUSION

I dreamed a setting sun
Went dark above my land.
The light of Washington
Became a setting sun;
The light of Jefferson
Forsook his faithful band.
I dreamed a setting sun
Went dark above my land.

TO THE PASSING GREAT

Rest, adorer of Genteel Tradition!
Rich in business gains, what have you won,
Gutting life and land by law's permission,
In defense of nice Genteel Tradition
Branding better pay for men sedition?
Shut in private schemes of hazards run,
Rest, adorer of Genteel Tradition,
Gutted by rich gains.—What have you won?

THE PEACE OF MUNICH

The brave dreams that mattered
Sleep in dust.
Savage hands have shattered
The brave dreams that mattered;
Now the flag lies tattered,
Swords in rust.
The brave dreams that mattered
Sleep in dust.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

When dreaming God he walked with earth and man,
Dust with the dust of earth and living rain,
A City shone beyond his pondered plan
In truth and love. He walked with earth and man,
As ancient as the hills ere states began,
And dreams his spirit knew rose true and plain.
In acts of faith he walked with earth and man,
Dust with the dust of earth and living rain.

WE THE PEOPLE

Through ages long, in darkness going,
The dreams we dream in faith are certain,
And justice is our way of knowing
Through deepest pain, in darkness going,
A brighter light is breaking, glowing
Across the blind, dividing curtain.
Through ages long, in darkness going,
The dreams we dream in faith are certain.

CHEWING CHEWING-GUM

I thought you'd like to sit and talk.—
Talk about what?—Don't know,
Just talk, I guess, or take a walk.—
I thought you said to sit and talk,
There's nowhere else to go to, Chuck.—
I know a swell place, Joe.—
I thought.—You said to sit and talk,
Talk about what?—Don't know.

BIGNOISE PARSON

The Bible is a bloody book—
If you don't like it go to hell!
It ain't a cozy chimney nook;
The Bible is a bloody book!
It ain't (get wise) sweet on a crook,
Or fancy whore, or slimy swell!
The Bible is a bloody book—
If you don't like it go to hell!

THE HOUSE OF BUSINESS

The son of Maia adorns a wall
In praise of our financial might
And trade. In Exhibition Hall,
The son of Maia adorns a wall!
No more his word a trumpet-call;
A show, the god of Attic light:
The son of Maia adorns a wall
In praise of our financial might.

THE HOUSE OF PRAYER

The Son of God adorns a wall,
His message of the Way is dead.
O Lord have mercy on us all—
The Crucified adorns a wall!
And civil voices, whining, drawl
Their faith, because His blood was shed.
The Son of God adorns a wall,
His message of the Way is dead.

A GOD WHO MADE GOOD

Prometheus! Demigod of old! . . .
A slave-boy in the Modern Home,
You're top to-day, your use extolled
(Prometheus—demigod of old)
In electric stoves and heaters, sold
Newfangled in steel, enamel, chrome.
Prometheus! . . . Demigod of old,
A slave-boy in the Modern Home!

by Ben R. Sleeper

QUESTIONS TO GERTRUDE

"The conflict which seems today most clear and interesting is left a muddle; the conflict between Hamlet's identification with his guilty uncle (his hatred of his father because of his own love for his mother) and his traditional duty to avenge his father's death." From "Literary Form" by Edwin Berry Burgum in SEWANEE REVIEW, July-September, 1941.

What did you really think when Hamlet locked
Your closet door and stood confronting you
With flaming haunted eyes to wring your heart?
Did your keen sense detect the stifled fumes
Of passion more incestuous than the king's
From that rebellious hell that mutined in
His bones whom the compulsive ardour's charge
Wracked with such panic and bewilderment?

Did you, all woman and intuitive,
Cry out for fear your *life* was threatened—or what?

And in that one tense moment that elapsed
Between the blind thrust and the arras lifting
Did you *suspect* what a lava surge of triumph
How wildly swelled frustration's shrivelled veins?

by Calvin S. Brown, Jr.

ON READING *BEOWULF*

NOT long ago it occurred to me that, since I had taught *Beowulf* and even written a typically elaborate article on one small point in it, it might not be a bad idea to read the poem. In order to be free of both pedantic associations and trivial interruptions, I went out to a spot in the North Georgia hills where, half a mile from any road, a little stream forms a series of rapids and waterfalls. I had brought along Klaeber's edition (surely the fact that poetry should be read in its original language need not be argued), and after using two rubber bands to isolate 120 spacious pages of text from 487 crowded pages of introduction, bibliography, parallels, notes, and glossary, I sat down on a remarkably comfortable ledge of rock and began to read. In a single sitting, during which the only interruptions came from the primitive necessity of moving with the sun and an occasional pause for the simple pleasure of watching a cardinal or minnow, the entire story, from the history of Scyld Scefing to the funeral of Beowulf, unfolded itself. Strangely enough (as many may think), it was a very entertaining morning's reading.

The very fact that this should seem strange suggests the first and only important difficulty in the reading. I had determined to look at *Beowulf* as a poem, but for the first few hundred lines I found it very difficult to exclude a host of more or less irrelevant scholarly considerations. One can read the *Odyssey* with great pleasure and yet have only the haziest idea of the location of Ithaca; in fact, one does not ordinarily think about it at all. But in the early part of *Beowulf* constant vigilance was necessary to suppress even my sketchy familiarity with the large "literature" on such problems as the location of Heorot and the identity of the Geats. A strong effort of will convinced me that Heorot was simply Hrothgar's feasting-hall, the Geats were Beowulf's people, and the two were a short sea-voyage apart. (How short?

Another disputed point—away with it!) For the purposes of the poem, this was all that mattered. But the fact which became painfully obvious here was that *Beowulf* is not normally read as a poem: by the time one has gained sufficient fluency in Anglo-Saxon to read it without having laboriously to translate, he has reached a point of technical scholarship where he takes up the poem in order to count the pleonastic verbs of motion, study the phonology of Anglian word-forms, analyze the mixture of pagan and Christian elements, determine the use of cases with some preposition, make conjectures about the history of early Germanic tribes or customs—in short, to pursue a host of investigations, linguistic, geographical, historical, ethnological, antiquarian, almost anything except purely literary. All these studies have, of course, their value and their place, but it seems unfortunate that, like the extra-curricular activities of our colleges, they have succeeded in crowding out the studies to which they are supposed to be ancillary. At any rate, after a short while these considerations were banished by the interest of the poem itself. When I reached line 224, “eoletes æt ende,” there was a triumph in a flash of awareness (not sufficiently protracted to be called a thought) that the phrase said that the voyage of Beowulf’s band was over, and that I had no desire to meditate on the various explanations of the disputed word *eoletes*. From this point on Beowulf rushed through the glory and the final tragedy of his life unencumbered by a pack of yelping commentators at his heels.

A genuine reading of the poem suggested that the commonly accepted estimate of it is entirely inadequate. This estimate, derived from a hasty skimming of badly translated excerpts in some anthology designed for a “survey course” in English literature, plus the random remarks of a lecturer who, years ago, struggled through parts of the poem under the lash of a professional philologist, may be summed up as an attitude of patronizing glorification. *Beowulf*, like the *Chanson de Roland*, must be a great epic simply because every nation ought to have a great epic at the dawn of its literature, and there is no other candidate for the position. Like *Piers Plowman*, it must be great literature because it is of the utmost historical importance; yet a great deal of the best historical material is contained in long and pointless digressions. It is a prolix and repetitious poem which

achieves grandeur by its stark simplicity. It is a grand unit made of two parts which refuse to fit together. The glory of its style is due to strange things called "kennings" by which the poet keeps the reader guessing what he is talking about; and these kennings are competently assisted by a quaint device with some strange name, the open secret of which is that the poet really means (if anything) the opposite of what he says. These statements, I believe, represent without too much exaggeration the general impression in the mind of the average person who is reasonably intelligent on the subject of Shakespeare or Milton, and similar articles of faith could easily be drawn up for the various classes of specialists who make detailed studies of the non-literary aspects of the poem.

Probably all classes of readers tend to think of *Beowulf* as a very long poem. Even though we may know theoretically that it is a bit less than thirty-two hundred lines, we usually think of its length as more nearly that of the *Faerie Queene* than that of *Romeo and Juliet*. This impression is clearly due to the laborious study of individual lines and short passages, for we think of length in terms of elapsed time. I can still remember my astonishment when, after my high-school Latin class had spent about three months plowing through the *First Oration Against Cataline*, we were informed that it was, at most, a twenty-minute speech. In this Ciceronian spirit we usually ask the *Beowulf* poet, "How long will this madness of yours elude us? To what length will your unlimited brass go?" Yet a connected reading of the poem requires less than three hours. Our erroneous idea of length applies to the "digressions" with even greater force, but a connected reading shows that they are all short and, more important still, that they are not all digressions. For example, after the company has trailed the wounded Grendel to his lair, someone begins to compose a song on the exploits of Beowulf, and another member of the group devotes forty lines to the adventures of Sigemund. Is this a digression? What could be more natural than that the great deliverance just achieved by Beowulf should suggest the glory of a national hero who had similarly killed a monster? This passage is simply a natural and effective way of raising Beowulf to the status of the heroes of antiquity. Further than this, it is even a preparation, in its mention of the dragon's body which melted

in its own heat, for what actually took place in Grendel's mere the next day, just as the swimming escapade of young Beowulf, already described in his argument with Unferth, is a preparation for the underwater incident with Grendel's mother. Wiglaf's speech after Beowulf's death is another example. He berates the cowardly retainers who took to the woods during their prince's fight with the dragon, and during his speech he reviews a good deal of history, reaching the conclusion that Beowulf's death leaves the country open to attacks which can now reasonably be expected. Would it necessarily be digression for a man speaking on the alleged defencelessness of the Panama Canal to devote some attention to the rise of Japanese imperialism? Similarly, Beowulf's account of the engagement of Freawaru and Ingeld, inserted in his report to Hygelac after his return from Hrothgar's court, shows him as not merely a good fighter, but a shrewd political observer as well—a part of his character which needs to be developed, since he is soon to become a ruler himself. Certainly there are some genuine digressions in the poem, and some of them are tiresome in spite of their brevity (it is not my intention to maintain that *Beowulf* is a flawless poem), but we label many passages digression simply because we do not consider them in context and because, in our smug modernity, we gratuitously assume that an Anglo-Saxon poet could not possibly entertain any purpose beyond giving the events of his plot, and hence anything which fails to tell what happened next is evidence of his inability to keep to the subject.

The prejudice that *Beowulf* cannot be, and hence is not, a thoughtfully constructed poem is best seen in the usual criticism that it is composed of two stories connected only by the accidental fact that they have the same hero. Those who complain most loudly about the inclusion of irrelevant material apparently wish to have a detailed account of the half-century of Beowulf's reign. Our poet is wiser. His subject, as we admit in the title of the poem, is his hero. Having shown him in the greatest adventure of his youth—and told enough in "digressions" to show that the Grendel episode is typical of his character—the poet jumps fifty years to show him in the situation which is perhaps the greatest test of human character. Beowulf goes out to fight the dragon, knowing that he is going to his death in the line of

duty, feeling (in a twice-used phrase) "death immeasurably near." Over the entire story of the dragon hangs a heavy sense of foreboding and doom. We are so used to classifying the idea that things are not what they once were, that all is hastening to destruction, as the "Ubi sunt" commonplace of Old English poetry that we are likely to miss the dramatic appropriateness of its use. In the adventures with Grendel and his mother, Beowulf is strong in the confidence of youth. He accepts death as a fact, for the warrior of his time saw it too often and in too violent forms to think of it as a philosophical abstraction. He is even ready to admit, since no one can know when fate may strike, that he may be killed by Grendel, and he accepts the possibility calmly and, what seems strangest to the modern man, without euphemism. If Grendel wins, he tells Hrothgar, "there will be no need for you to cover my face, for he will have me, stained with slaughter, if death take me. He means to bear away his bloody prey and to eat me; the lonely one will devour me mercilessly and stain his moor-lair with my gore, nor will you need to worry long about disposing of my body." The hero faces the possibility too directly to be able to say evasively "If I don't come back. . ." or "If anything happens to me. . ." Nevertheless, he has enough of Hazlitt's "feeling of immortality in youth" to be sure that he can take care of himself unless fate be irrevocably against him. Certainly the Beowulf of the first adventures feels that life and this world are brave things, as fine now as on the dawn of creation. The contrast between youth and age is first shown when Hrothgar laments the death of Æschere, and Beowulf tells him that it is better to avenge a friend than to mourn for him. Towards the end of the first part of the poem it is very clearly brought out: in a speech of general advice Hrothgar, an old man, appropriately reminds his young guest that death may come in any form and at any time. This sense of mortality and the sorrow of life is reserved for old men; Hygelac continues it on Beowulf's return, and thus it serves as a transition to the latter part of the poem, which shows Beowulf more or less in the rôle of Hrothgar. In its opening lines we are told that Beowulf has now reigned fifty years—exactly the length of Hrothgar's rule when he last appeared in the poem. Next we have an account of a hoard guarded by a dragon, and the poet includes in it the speech

of an old man who had buried the treasure centuries before, saying that he committed it back to earth because there was none left to enjoy it rightly: the friends of his youth were gone, he was old, and everything was declining to ruin. From the point of view of plot this speech is unnecessary, since we need to know only that the hoard existed and was guarded by a dragon, but the feeling of antiquity in this gloomy speech of an embittered old man immediately sets the tone for all the final section of the poem. The last days of Beowulf give, on a smaller scale, an impression remarkably like that produced by the gorgeous decline in the last hundred pages of Malory. Beowulf never wavers from his heroic view of life; he does not hesitate, as king, to take the battle with the people's foe on himself. But his feeling is now one of melancholy: he senses that doom is close upon him; he who has scorned armor and weapons in his earlier fights now has a special shield made; he reminisces about the battles of his youth—in short, he is old.

The second part of the poem is organically connected with the first even beyond this rounding out of Beowulf's character and the conclusion of his life. Hrothgar, himself too old to fight and living among lesser men, was despairing of deliverance from Grendel when Beowulf, at the height of his youthful prowess, appeared and dared death to save him. Realizing that he had not long to live, Hrothgar wished to make Beowulf his successor. Fifty years later Beowulf fought the dragon, but soon realized that he was too old to win. All his retainers fled, with one exception: suddenly Wiglaf appeared by his side, covered him with his shield, and killed the dragon. As might be expected, the two situations differ sufficiently to show Beowulf's superiority over Hrothgar, but the parallelism continues in the fact that, in his last words, Beowulf hands on to Wiglaf the pride and responsibilities of kingship. This similarity can hardly be accidental. Is it not rather a clear implication of a philosophy which transcends the individual? We lament the fall of the old hero, but though his type is rare, there is always *one* to support him in his last difficulties and then to succeed to his place: heroes die, but the hero is eternal.

It is difficult to discuss the stylistic merits of the poem without being able to quote it in its original form, but some attempt must

be made, especially since the difficulty of adequate translation probably accounts for a good deal that is distorted in our criticism. Two characteristic features make it impossible to reproduce the effect of its best passages. The first of these is a looseness of sentence structure which allows the "paratactic" construction, a loose sort of apposition by which a single general idea may be repeated several times in different words. A conspicuous example runs: "I will ask the friend of the Danes, prince of the Scyldings, breaker of rings, famous prince, about your journey." The original passage, however, scatters these synonyms for Hrothgar throughout the sentence. Yet even though these repetitions are more neatly managed in Old English, and even though they present Hrothgar in different capacities and hence are not entirely pointless, it must be admitted that this device is, too frequently, a meaningless cliché. The other difficulty lies in the powerful effects of word-compounds which in modern English seem clumsy if hyphenated and strange if written "solid". What can the translator do with "windhome cliffs", "morningcold spears", "the ringsword sang a greedy warsong"? Usually he is driven to the use of devious prepositional phrases for single words: "cliffs, home of the winds", "spears cold in the morning", etc. (If Mr. James Joyce succeeds in accustoming the reading public to his combined words, he will have simplified the translator's task considerably.) The same sort of dilution destroys the sharpness of a good deal of figurative language. If we could call a sword a "battlelight", "fileproduct", or "fallowhilt" or a sheaf of spears a "gray fromabove ashforest" without feeling any awkwardness in the expressions, we would be better able to render the poem into modern English. In reality, a considerable part of the charge of wordiness brought against *Beowulf* is caused by the insertion of prepositions, articles, and relative constructions necessary to make a translation run idiomatically. Each of the four synonyms for Hrothgar quoted a moment ago was, in the original, two words, but the eight became thirteen when I translated them. Except for this difficulty, the metaphors would seem both natural and vigorous to the modern reader: the sports-writers' *gridiron* and *horsehide* are pure kennings.

Yet even the worst translation, no matter how it may destroy single words or phrases, cannot quite obliterate the power of con-

nected passages. The description of Grendel's mere is a famous example, but too often it is quoted as if it were unique. By free translation we should at least be able to show that there are other fine passages. Notice the suggestiveness of a few generalized details in Beowulf's voyage home from Heorot:

They went then on ship, stirred the deep water, left the Danish land. By the mast was the seacloth, the sail made fast with a rope. The seawood creaked. No wind barred the seafarers from their journey over the waves. The wavegoer sped; floated foamynecked forth on the billows, the curveprowed ship over the seastreams, until they could see the Geatish cliffs, familiar headlands.

The passage is different from the one describing their outgoing voyage, but certain intentional echoes in wording connect the two in the reader's mind over a space of some seventeen hundred lines. (In passing, it may be noted that most of the repetitions in the poem make some change in the repeated material: when Beowulf, after returning home, tells Hygelac about his adventures, he omits many details which we have already heard and adds others which the author apparently reserved for this occasion.) One more passage will suffice for the illustration of general poetic merit, and I deliberately choose one full of the so-called commonplaces of Old English poetry. After Beowulf's death, Wiglaf announces his intention of burning the dragon's treasures on his leader's funeral-pyre, and then goes on to foretell the hard days to come:

These shall fire devour, flame enfold. No warrior shall wear a jewel as keepsake—no gleaming maid shall wear a chain about her neck—but many a one, gloomy-hearted and goldless, shall tread alien lands now that our leader has laid aside laughter, mirth and joy. Therefore shall many a morningcold spear be gripped in hand, raised aloft. Nor shall the music of harps rouse the warrior, but the black raven, greedy over the slain, shall say much—shall tell the eagle how he fared at the feast when he and the wolf plundered the slaughtered.

That is—in the original—poetry, and passages of similar merit are not rare. It would be absurd to try to place *Beowulf* among the few supremely great works of literature, for it is not of the

stuff that makes an *Iliad* or a *Divine Comedy*. With all its flaws, however, it is a work of genius which, if read as literature, may be a surprise even to one who has devoted years of intensive study to it. I shall be satisfied if this account of my first genuine reading of *Beowulf* leads anyone to verify for himself my statement that it is a poem which can be read with pleasure and praised without patronizing.

by Haldeen Braddy

THE LITTLE WAY

I have come this little way:
Thus far, no further.
I have learned this of one,
Of only one, no other:

Build not your dreams upon
Desired event,
Long heavenward for aught
But accident.

These are no words for reading,
No, no direction;
Only the this that remains
Of the defection:

I have come this little way
For one, no other.
Curse the day or night
When I seek further.

by Edward Foster

CORE OF BELIEF

AN INTERPRETATION OF THE PLAYS OF MAXWELL ANDERSON

IT was the collaborated *WHAT PRICE GLORY?*, one of the toughest plays of the tough twenties, which established Mr. Anderson as a playwright. That was in 1924, when we had all decided to put aside what was left of romance, patriotism, religion, and idealism of any variety. Noisily disillusioned, we would settle down to whatever version of skepticism blended most amusingly with the last bottle supplied by a bootlegger.

WHAT PRICE GLORY? hit that mood perfectly. Here was war as it is—the whole nasty, brutish, senseless mess, with little adventure and no romance unless the feud of Flagg and Quirt over the favors of Cognac Pete's daughter could be so dignified. As for making the world safe for democracy, Kiper disposed of that one by telling the truth: he had joined up to see the girls.

Of course, there was Captain Flagg, who seemed a somewhat better type of officer than was needed for such a hard-bitten exposé of war. There was his curious confidence in the superior morale produced by lax discipline. When the general called Flagg's men a bunch of bums, the retort was, "Individualists, General, individualists", which drew the general's grudging admission that Flagg's outfit was the best for hard assignments. But in the welter of profanity and dug-out humor, no one noticed such lines. Mr. Anderson was established as a "hard guy" who had no "truck" with sentimental illusions.

In *KEY LARGO*, of the 1939-40 season he wrote again of war for democracy, again asked the question, what price glory? The answer came with poignant emphasis. No man of sense dies for glory, yet a man will die for that which he deeply believes—for the essential values of Western Civilization, for personal freedom and

integrity. Lacking faith in such values and the will to fight for them, a man dies spiritually—"and that's death, too". His 1940 play, *JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM*, amplifies this interpretation of his problem of belief by projecting it into the realm of religion. Mr. Anderson seems to be saying that faith in God must be added to social and political convictions, if the modern world is to regain sanity and wholeness of spirit.

Roughly, fifteen years separate *WHAT PRICE GLORY*; and these last two plays; fifteen years in which Mr. Anderson with all of us has lived through the worst of depressions, a long and searching criticism of capitalist democracy, the constant strain of New Deal experimentation, the decline of free institutions in Europe, and the ever-widening triumphs of totalitarianism. One wonders how an intelligent person, with vision sharp for realities and the intellectual honesty which must call black, black when he sees it, could have moved from the hard, skeptical realism of *WHAT PRICE GLORY*? to the sturdy and poetic affirmations of *KEY LARGO* and *JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM*. Surely, this development must have meaning for us.

Part of the interpretation to follow has to do with the dramatist's changing conception of the effects which he wishes to create in the theatre, but the chief emphasis naturally falls upon the gradual deepening and enrichment of his core of belief.

II

Even Mr. Anderson's first group of realistic dramas—*WHAT PRICE GLORY?*, *OUTSIDE LOOKING IN*, *SATURDAY'S CHILDREN*, *GYP-SY*, *GODS OF THE LIGHTNING*, and *BOTH YOUR HOUSES*—suggest that the skepticism of the 'twenties had not completely smothered his spirit.

To be sure, the surface of these plays is typical of the style of the period. The dialogue is plain, bitter, and frequently vulgar prose; the humor, always present, has a wry flavor; the settings are prevaillingly drab. For subjects, the playwright chose sore spots in our way of living: the senseless brutality of war, the miseries of the under-privileged, the frustrations of marriage, the perversion of justice to serve class interests, and gross dishonesty in government. Yet, curiously, the dominant impression which

one carries from these plays has nothing of the morbidity which rises from so much of the social criticism on the stage written during these years.

SATURDAY'S CHILDREN is a problem comedy on love in a cottage. The young couple, Rims and Bobby O'Neil, are doing what they can to make a go of marriage in New York on his one hundred sixty dollar salary. They discover that married love is mostly grocery bills, bickering over the budget, the intrusion of bad advice by relatives, and a succession of quarrels over what seem to be trivialities. It is a situation meanly commonplace. But Mr. Anderson clearly shows that there is nothing mean in Rims and Bobby. Both are competent in business; both are capable of intellectual honesty. Individuals in their own rights, determined to face down circumstances, they share nothing of that pathological defeatism which the 'twenties considered the touchstone of realistic characterization. Nor does it occur to Bobby and Rims to question the worth of love, itself. The playwright likes them and makes them both seem important to his audience. The cause of their rift, as the wife perceives, is deeper than poverty. Marriage has tied them too closely together. Living in a small house, they must forever discuss and compromise trivial issues which each in the past had easily managed without much thought or discussion. The situation demands a sacrifice of personal integrity which neither of them can make. As Bobby says, "It's degrading".

In a clash between individual values and the demands of a convention or institution, Mr. Anderson's sympathy usually goes to the individual. To cut the knot in SATURDAY'S CHILDREN, he lets Bobby break the convention that keeps married couples under a single roof, sends her back to the job which will restore self-respect, establishes her in her own room, and gives her Rims as a husband-lover who can be met whenever it seems a good idea.

Lightly and in the simplest terms, he has touched the theme that runs through all his plays—the dignity, the inviolability of human personality. And it is precisely because this idea motivates the satire on social and political abuses that even Mr. Anderson's realistic plays rise a little above the morbidity of so many Broadway offerings of that period.

III

Why did this writer, whose interest in, and vision of the present were so sharp, turn to poetic drama of the past in 1930? His preface to *WINTERSET*, "A Prelude to Poetry in the Theatre", supplies the answer.

When I wrote my first play, *WHITE DESERT*, I was weary of plays in prose that never lifted from the ground. It failed, and I did not come back to verse again until I had discovered that poetic tragedy had never been successfully written about its own place and time With this admonition in mind, I wrote *ELIZABETH THE QUEEN* and a succession of historical plays in verse.

If I understand this essay and its later amplifications in *THE ESSENCE OF TRAGEDY*, the impulse was not to escape from the present into a more glamorous past or to find some justification for writing in verse. It was rather Mr. Anderson's desire to revive an older conception of tragedy, a drama of kingly characters whose nobility in defeat and death assures us of the worth of human personality. To cite the most familiar example, *HAMLET*, despite its "unhappy ending", is never depressing; we leave the theatre in a mood of exaltation, for the greatness, the nobility of the hero has been demonstrated before our eyes. For the heightened emotions and aspirations of such drama, the playwright believed that poetry is still the natural medium. And he chose historical subjects only because he distrusted his own ability to create an audience's willingness to accept the mood of poetic tragedy in the presence of contemporary actions.

To a degree, *ELIZABETH THE QUEEN*, *NIGHT OVER TAOS*, *MARY OF SCOTLAND*, *VALLEY FORGE*, and *THE MASQUE OF KINGS* do lift from the ground. With a disregard of nice accuracy in historical detail justified by his purpose, Mr. Anderson poured his energy into the creation of high-spirited and magnanimous characters. Elizabeth and Essex, old Pablo Montoya, Mary Stuart and the Earl of Bothwell, General Washington of Valley Forge, Prince Rudolph of Austria—they may be only roughly like their historical prototypes, but they are magnificent people.

Elizabeth, of the first drama, will illustrate the type. Any competent modern dramatist might have made as much of the human

side of the characterization—of the aging Queen's jealousy of her pretty young maids of honor, her long struggle to put aside the love which gave too much power to Essex, her quick feminine rages, her wiles in love and statecraft. More striking is the rightness of the crisis moments when this woman must be Queen of England.

When Cecil warns her that she is playing into the hands of the rebels by permitting Burbage to play the seditious RICHARD II, that half the town has risen against her, she quietly waves him aside, "Little man, little man, let me alone." When her love of Essex has almost persuaded her to accept him as king-consort, it is the same inner assurance and ability to rise above personal motives which brings queenly words to her lips.

Why, who am I
To stand here paltering with a rebel noble!
I am Elizabeth, daughter of a king,
The Queen of England, and you my subject . . .
 . . . You whom I made, and gave
All that you have, you, an upstart, defying
Me to grant pardon, lest you sweep me from power
And take my place from me? I tell you if Christ his blood
Ran streaming from the heavens for a sign, you'd die for this.

In Elizabeth and his other tragic figures, Mr. Anderson realized something of that sense of human greatness which he is always seeking. But however full the illusion when the plays are on the stage, one carries away a slight feeling of disappointment. Have these tragic passions, these high nobilities been whipped up merely for display? Knowing Mr. Anderson's sincerity, one can't accept that explanation. Is it not rather that poetic tragedy is never convincing unless it is built upon a philosophical attitude firmly and beautifully suggested by the drama and accepted by the audience? Mr. Anderson's heroes are noble—well, because they are noble. Only in moments much too brief does the playwright find words which recreate for us the spiritual worlds in which they are moving.

IV

Since 1934 he has driven his faith in the individual into a corner of the mind, faced its implications in terms of general ideas now tenable, and hammered out an unpretentious credo. On all larger questions, Mr. Anderson is humbly agnostic, nor is there

place for a supernatural deity in his thought. From the astronomer's picture of the universe, he grasps only a sense of the strangeness, the aimlessness of our planet's "incomprehensible journey among constellations". From the biologist, he is forced to learn that man traces his ancestry to "a humble little animal with a rudimentary fore-brain which grew with use and need". From the historian comes the report of the centuries of struggle for space and the products of the ground which seems to have been the chief interest of this animal's descendants.

At this stage in his thinking, Mr. Anderson might find Shakespeare's "What a piece of work is a man!"—rather pathetic self-delusion.

But there is something in the man which refuses to rest at this grimly positive and pessimistic level. He must seek for evidence of a more endurable destiny for the race. Having failed to find meaning in the universe, he discovers it in man himself—in the occasional noble action, "in the idealism of children and young men, in the sayings of such teachers as Christ and Buddha, . . . in the hieroglyphics of the great masters of the arts, . . . in the occasional gleam of scientific light." If the sky is empty, there is at least splendor of a sort in humanity at its best.

Thus Mr. Anderson asks for better men and women rather than for an immediate overhauling of their codes and institutions. He believes that the individual mind is free "according to its strength and desire" to choose between the "shifting patterns of government, justice, religion, business, and personal conduct"—that enduring advance depends upon the rightness of these personal choices.

We need more intelligence and sensitivity if ever an animal needed anything. Without them we are caught in a trap of selfish interest, international butchery, and a creed of survival that periodically sacrifices the best to the worst. And the only way out that I can see is a better brain and superior inner control. The artist's faith is simply a faith in the human race and its gradual acquisition of wisdom.

It is this humanistic reading of man's destiny which has shaped Mr. Anderson's plays of the last six years. Whether his subjects come out of the past or the present, he has attempted to view them in terms of ultimate values, of that minimum of faith

which he shares with most thinkers and artists who have deeply influenced Western Culture.

Naturally, the typical protagonist of recent Anderson dramas is not quite the same person whose strivings provided the clashes of his earlier productions. Whereas Bobby O'Neil of *SATURDAY'S CHILDREN* contended with a single problem, how to maintain a modicum of self-respect in marriage, Mio of *WINTERSET*, Van Dorn of *HIGH TOR*, and King McCloud of *KEY LARGO*, must see the immediate issue in the context of a broadly conceived system of values. Mio must vindicate his father's innocence of crime—that is the immediate issue—but he must also discover enduring meaning in the whole world in which he is living. It is this insistent search for wholeness, for a rounded and energetic faith, which is the center of each of these characters. And the most telling scene in each drama presents "the spiritual awakening or regeneration of its hero", the discovery of that which he has been seeking.

Viewed as Mr. Anderson's first experiment in this manner of tragedy, *WINTERSET* was a brilliant performance. It has moments of terror and beauty rarely surpassed on the modern stage; it has a hero conceived in truly tragic terms; its theme—the purging of Mio's hatred of perverted justice—provides scope for the overtones of social and philosophical interpretation which the playwright associates with tragedy. Finally, *WINTERSET* is magnificent theatre, a succession of taut scenes which hold the interest of those who care nothing for the intellectual drift of a play.

But *WINTERSET* will not withstand critical reading, for Mio's "regeneration" is not convincing.

The character, to be sure, is finely conceived. Mio's prodigious energy, his devil-may-care contempt for ordinary convention and ordinary danger, and his flair for salty humor are engaging surface traits. The core of the conception is also interesting. Essentially a large spirit, a young philosopher who demands that life must scan, Mio has been worn down to a cynical contempt for men and their ways by brooding over the perversion of justice which executed his father, Romagna, and the contempt which he, the son of a supposed murderer, must always encounter.

This earth, [he believes]
 came tumbling down from chaos, . . .
 and bred up worms, blind worms that sting
 each other here in the dark.
 These blind worms of the earth
 took out my father and killed him—
 and he was a man
 such as men might be if gods were men.

Mio's judgment of his world is justified by the characters who infest the East River slum which is the drama's setting—by Garth, who withheld evidence from the court which would have incriminated himself and saved Romagna—Garth, now a mere urge to live on any terms; by broken Judge Gaunt, who must at length admit that prejudice and class interest swayed his judgment in the case; by Trock Estrella, the actual murderer, covering his guilt by killing everyone who has knowledge of the crime. One can hardly imagine a place more brutal than this slum—or a "regeneration" more difficult to contrive.

For that purpose, Mr. Anderson created two characters, the aged Rabbi Esdras and his daughter, Miriamme. Esdras has long outlived that youthful stage when men ask and expect to receive absolute justice in any sphere of living. He has mellowed into a kindly skepticism which can be reduced to five words—one lives as he can. But however cogent or lovely his long speeches may have seemed to an audience, they do not touch Mio. Esdras, badly needed for the intellectual structure of the tragedy, fails in his essential function.

Ultimately, then, it is sweetness, the simple womanliness, of Miriamme which draws Mio back from his vision of hate and horror. It is Miriamme's love and his for her which impel the lad to put aside his desire to publish his father's innocence, to die rather than implicate her brother, Garth. Plainly, it is heroic sacrifice motivated by a love which purges all hatred, all passion for justice, all contempt for the vicious world about him.

Now that is precisely the sort of dramatic and intellectual cliché which Ibsen supposedly drove out of the theatre sixty years ago. And it is disappointing to see Mr. Anderson, with his fine vision of wholeness in living, falling back upon such a dubious idea for WINTERSSET'S crucial scene. The darkness visible of the crime-

ridden slum has burst into light, a light suspiciously like the soft pink glow of sentiment.

V

Two of the recent comedies, *HIGH TOR* and *KNICKERBOCKER HOLIDAY*, should be welded into this interpretation. They are delightful adventures in phantasy and buffonery, sure evidence that the playwright has not forgotten how to laugh or to make an audience laugh with him. But in their shrewed notation of the essentials of American character, they also suggest that the writer has joined the significant group of artists, critics, and historians who are reinterpreting our past in order to establish a tradition in which we can believe and grow. One point they abundantly make clear: Mr. Anderson has put aside his early faith in socialism, has spoken strongly for a new attempt to understand and revitalize democracy.

Though the temptation to linger with the comedies is strong, I must hurry on to the latest poetic dramas: *KEY LARGO* (1939) and *JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM* (1940). The first aroused little enthusiasm among either critics or audiences. Yet if one will give it the attention which its design and meaning deserve, *KEY LARGO* may well appear the fullest embodiment of the dramatist's conception of poetic tragedy and of his faith in the values of Western Civilization. For it is at once the story of the "regeneration" of King McCloud and an allegory of the plight of democracy in a world fast moving toward totalitarianism.

The curtain rises on a group of young Americans, volunteers in the Spanish Loyalist Army, as they loaf on outpost duty on a hill-top in northern Spain. It is night, a moonlit night, and one of them is singing.

"Ma chandelle est morte je n'ai plus de feu. . . ."

And that loss of fire, of faith in the rightness of a struggle against philosophy of force, is the personal problem of one in the group, King McCloud, just as it has been a cause of recurring doubt, of paralyzing indecision in all of the nations which have been threatened by Hitler and Mussolini.

Having enlisted with the Loyalists in a burst of idealism, McCloud has recently come to believe that the game isn't worth playing.

We should know
 by this time . . . that nothing
 you win means freedom or equality
 or justice—that all formulas are false—
 and known to be false—democracy, communism,
 socialism, nazism—dead religions
 nobody believes in—or if he does believe
 he's quietly made use of by the boys
 who long ago learned better . . . Stalin walking
 his swamps in blood, Hitler's swastikas
 in blood above the lintels, the English and French
 desperate because everything has failed,
 because life itself has failed and capitalism . . .
 . . . Long ago
 men found out the sky was empty; it follows
 that men are a silly accident, meaningless,
 here in an empty sky . . .
 Why should we die here for a dead cause, for a symbol,
 on these empty ramparts, where there's nothing to win,
 even if we could win it?

So McCloud deserts his friends, saves his hide, when the outpost is about to be attacked by an overwhelming Franco force. Merely living on any terms, he feels, is better than death for empty illusions. The others stay at their posts and are killed.

But McCloud has to go on living with himself after he returns to the States. Discovering that there is no sanctity for a man who has ratted on comrades, he desperately seeks some way of regaining self-respect. Ultimately, on one of the Florida keys, he finds himself in a coil which precisely parallels in its conflicting values that night in northern Spain. The gangster-gambler, Murillo—symbol of totalitarian force—has killed a man, has made a deal with Sheriff Gash for shifting responsibility for the crime to a pair of innocent Indians. The dramatist has carefully suggested the significance of the Indians: unimportant in themselves, they symbolize in their earlier escape from a chain gang that same thrust toward freedom which had inspired the Loyalist revolt. McCloud can save the Indians—by risking his own life.

In preparing for McCloud's decision, Mr. Anderson created a splendid character, the Spaniard d'Alcala. The father of one of the lads whom McCloud had deserted in Spain, this veteran of an earlier revolution has in his long years of blindness thought deeply. He can answer McCloud's argument for living as one can. Granting the presumption that man is helpless before ultimate questions, he manages to twist that sense of futility into a challenge:

. to take this dust
 and water and our range of appetites
 and build them toward some vision of a god
 of beauty and unselfishness and truth—
 could we ask better of the mud we are
 than to accept the challenge, and look up
 and search for god-head? If it's true we came
 from the sea-water . . . we've come a long way;
 so far there's no predicting what we'll be
 before we end. It may be women help
 this progress, choosing out men who seem
 a fractional step beyond sheer appetite—
 and perhaps men help
 by setting themselves forever, even to the death,
 against cruelty and arbitrary power,
 for that's the beast, the ancient, belly-foot beast
 From which we came

Then there is the girl, Alegre, d'Alcala's daughter, who had idealized McCloud when her brother was writing from Spain that this lad was the best in the company. It is she who recreates in his mind a vision of the person he had been before all values crumbled in his hands.

At last McCloud can decide. He can say quietly, knowing that he is choosing death, "A man must die for what he believes . . . and if he won't, he'll end in believing nothing at all—and that's death, too."

Perhaps the lovely and meaningful death of King McCloud seemed merely melodramatic to its 1939 audience but that was 1939 when the war seemed far away. Perhaps it was too much bother to follow long speeches in verse. Perhaps Mr. Anderson had leaned too heavily on a rather puzzling symbolism. Conceivably, *KEY LARGO* is a distinguished play for reading but not quite suitable for the stage.

Whatever its actual merits for the theatre, it must be clear that this tragedy marks a striking advance in the dramatist's long intellectual development. Built around a clear recognition of the great intuitions of Western Civilization—our faith in personal worth and dignity and wholeness of spirit, *KEY LARGO* mounts steadily to its poignant close and leaves with us the sense of exaltation which is the final effect of true poetic tragedy.

Though this tragedy might well have been the epilogue to a cycle which began with *WINTERSET*, Hitler's astounding victories seem to have prodded Mr. Anderson to reappraise the humanism of *THE ESSENCE OF TRAGEDY* and *KEY LARGO*. The Loyalist

debâcle in Spain had been hard to take, but the overrunning of Poland, Holland, Belgium, and France were events to shake his hard-won faith to its foundations. But this writer has a resilience that one must respect; he reexamined the ideas with which he had been working and moved toward a larger synthesis.

I am well aware that *JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM*, damned by faint critical praise and inadequate acting in the leading rôle, had an October run of only two weeks at the National Theatre. Mr Krutch of *THE NATION*, usually so discerning, saw in it nothing more than this. "The action of the play is concerned with the period when, according to Luke, the young Jesus went with the parents to Jerusalem and was discovered by them answering the questions of the men of the Sanhedrin. . . . Mr. Anderson represents the young boy as beginning to suspect that he may be the Messiah but assuming that this means the triumphal leader of his people. An outlaw rebel of the hills first makes him understand that suffering, not victory, is to be his rôle and that his only triumph will be in hearts of men who come after him. The youthful Jesus is terrified at first but accepts his mission in the end, and that is all."

That is not all. Mr. Anderson, who knows that victories are not won solely by armies and *material*, is again grappling with the unbelief which can undermine a great civilization. In 1938-39 he could see in the humanism of d'Alcala of sufficiently strong anchorage for the modern mind; in 1939-1940 he was forced to recognize that humanism divorced from religion is not enough. Rediscovering for himself a truth once central in American thinking, he came to understand that Christianity could be "the strongest influence among us toward that individual dignity upon which individual freedom is established". In short, Mr. Anderson united the love of God and of fellow men with the love of freedom and placed that conception in opposition to the Machiavellianism of the dictators.

But how to get this conflict on the stage? For external action, the playwright ranged the pious and liberty-loving Jews against the might of Rome, finding historical foundation for this device in Judah's revolt against Roman rule some sixty years before the birth of Jesus and in the seething unrest of the Jews in His

own time. Palestine is roughly equated with Poland or Czechoslovakia under Hitler; and if this phase of the play reaches no definite conclusion, there is much to rouse indignation against the enslavement of a sturdy nation.

For the inner struggle, he imagined the boy Jeshua (Jesus) torn between two conceptions of the Messianic mission. Dreaming over the prophets, he had believed that the Messiah would come with an army to meet Roman force with greater force. Yet he must learn from Ishmael that:

There will come no army
out of the sky to help. He will have few friends
and they will not understand him. He will have wisdom
and will cry out wisdom to all men in the street
but they will not hear. . . . He will die early,
a hateful and intolerable death,
and nails will be through his hands.

Finely natural is Jeshua's revulsion:

No I cannot! I cannot!
I have never borne pain! I cannot bear pain!
And I'm afraid of death!
I cannot face death! I say this is not for me—
to be this Messiah.

It is the revolt of a twelve-year old boy against the danger always inherent in a program of action based upon profound but unpopular truths; it is also the revolt of all soft nations against any situation which tests the depth of their belief in values beyond getting and spending.

With shrewd insight, Mr. Anderson traces Jeshua's gradual acceptance of his mission. He remains a child; he fears, he doubts, he questions Joseph and Miriam. Yet slowly a sense of reliance upon God in nerving him for the work to be done. Slowly he understands that ministering to the spirits of men is the true Messianic duty and the ultimate service to society and nation. At the quiet close of the drama, he can answer Shadrach's question, "What hope have we as a nation?"—by quoting Enoch's vision of a people strong in faith.

A city is but the outer hull or garment
of the faith that dwells within. Its palaces
and walls that stand up nobly in the air
and seem so tough and durable are blown
into these shapes by the spirit which inhabits—
blown like a bubble and will subside again

when the spirit is withdrawn. And what is true of cities is true of kingdoms. For a cycle of years they keep their faith, and this faith holds them steady against the winds. But when they cease to believe only a little while, the high roofs take rain, and the walls sink to the moat. There was once a city whose walls were destroyed by music blown against them, but the walls of every city are raised up by music and are held foursquare under the sun by the people's singing.

VI

Has Mr. Anderson spoken the last word of this long sustained consideration of the sanctity of human personality and its relation to state and society? Has he in *JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM* risen to a higher synthesis of the demands of liberty against authority by suggesting that a new personality, self-reliant in God-reliance, can emerge when man dedicates himself to the service of his fellows? The answer is difficult, for it must be based upon one's interpretation of a short speech at the close of the play. Shadrach asks of us what belongs to God . . . a man's mind, his freedom, his freedom to find his way to God in his own way". Authentic Christianity, or Christianity twisted by Mr. Anderson's noble but occasionally one-sided emphasis upon the individual as the supreme *desideratum* in society?—I can't be sure.

I am sure of this: the Anderson plays are declining in theatrical effectiveness but rising steadily in intellectual significance. If he is not an original thinker, Mr. Anderson has at least dug his teeth into a great subject; he has gradually moved beyond the crudely American conception of freedom as license to buy or sell anything at a profit to an Emersonian vision of the "infinite of the private man". And always one feels—here is the peculiar appeal of the dramas—that he has achieved insight by staring hard at facts. Only Sean O'Casey among his contemporaries can hammer as much of the crude stuff of living into poetry for the stage.

by Laura Krey

WHAT WIND?

And what wind serves to advance an honest mind?

JOHN DONNE.

TO have lived through the past decade is to have endured a profound and terrible experience. For as these portentous years have moved on from one climax to another, many must often have caught themselves thinking that now they could understand how the Greeks must have felt with the Persians camped just across from them, or the Romans when their world began quaking about them, or—to come closer home—how their own grandfathers and great-grandfathers must have shuddered as they watched the 'sixties riding in on the whirlwind.

Throughout all this tense and anxious period all kinds of different groups have been asking the very same groping questions: In what can we put our trust? In what knowledge, or values, or governments, or men? So far, however, no amount of inquiry has served to do more than reveal the disconcerting fact that nowadays people are quite commonly using the very same words to imply different, or even contradictory, meanings. Looking out upon all this nearly hopeless confusion, wherein experts are ranged against experts and priests against priests, M. Paul Valéry, in a recent series of distinguished essays, remarks that our whole Western world seems to have been halted like an armed fleet at sea by some vast, impenetrable fog.

This bewilderment of spirit is perhaps the most characteristic sign of our times; and for that reason it attracts the concern of the authors whose books¹ I hope to discuss in this article. What,

¹Jacques Maritain: *SCIENCE AND WISDOM*, Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1940; *SCHOLASTICISM AND POLITICS*, Macmillan Company, N. Y., 1940; *FRANCE, MY COUNTRY*, Longmans, Green and Company, N. Y., 1941.

Jose Ortega y Gasset: *TOWARD A PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY*, W. W. Norton and Company, N. Y., 1941.

Donald Culross Peattie: *THE ROAD OF A NATURALIST*, Houghton-Mifflin Company, Boston, 1941.

George Santayana: *THE REALM OF SPIRIT*, Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1940.

they all ask, are we to think about the nature and destiny of this peculiar human creature who does not seem yet to know whether he is in the world to create or destroy? Though it is quite possible to disagree with one or all of their conclusions, it is equally clear that they have raised questions which are fundamental.

II

Among those who are endeavoring to interpret this present, no one has been more tireless than the philosopher and critic, Jacques Maritain. Although he has recently lectured both at Princeton University and at Chicago, his work is comparatively unfamiliar to most Americans. Future historians, however, may come to estimate his analysis of the forces now operating in western culture as more significant than the majority of contemporary reviewers take it to be.

The present Maritain conceives of as "cruelly and crucially divided"—and who will not agree? On one side, he asserts, are ranged those who regard science, not as one form of knowledge among many, but as the *only* true knowledge; on the other, stand all those who refuse to be bound by so restricted a definition.

As evidence of the present immediacy of this very old schism which, under different names, has more than once divided whole peoples, one has only to listen in at almost any university gathering nowadays. To do so is to be very soon aware that many students no longer extend to Marx, Darwin, and Wundt that same over-weening veneration which nearly all their professors still accord these giants of their youth. This shift of opinion, which with us amounts merely to a mild refusal to canonize the achievements of physical science, has swept on in Europe, competent observers attest, to something like a pathological denial of reason. There the reversion, apparently, is based on the chastening realization that, while science knows a great deal about nature, it enjoys no such accurate knowledge about human beings—a conclusion naturally disputed by few who have endured, at close range, two major wars in a lifetime.

Remarking on the obvious fact that the learned are in no sense agreed, either here or abroad, as to any common base from which to proceed in their studies, Maritain concludes that no task is so immediately urgent as to achieve in our time some "vital and

spiritual harmony" among thinking men. As one way—he thinks the only way—to this end, he proposes a reconciliation of material science and immaterial wisdom under a form of society that he calls 'Christian humanism'. As to how best to implement this order, he is far from clear, though he does make a rather abortive attempt to sketch out certain plans involving a pyramidal structure of governmental organs. What is important in any government, he thinks, however, is not the letter, but the spirit.

In thus stressing the importance of moral and spiritual concepts in the maintenance of any civilization, he is joined by an expanding and oddly assorted group of continental writers who, though by no means religious, have become progressively pessimistic regarding the state to which man has come in his unbridled search after security and gain. This bleak disillusionment, this very distrust of life itself—a darker attitude, indeed, than the brash confidence evidenced in even the bitterest American proletarian literature—colors every page of Roger Martin Du Gard's monumental novel, *SUMMER 1914*, as it does the most recently published work of other French and Scandinavian writers. Where, many are asking abroad, is one to find that Promethean strength which makes a man want to keep on living in times like our own?

In answer to this query Maritain has published a number of books and essays in order to express one single conviction: that this laboring world is destined to go the way of Ur and Babylon unless it learns to reconcile the scientific outlook with that deeper spiritual understanding which he thinks of as always and only given of God. Like Dorothy Wellesley, he appears to believe that if "the pride of science stands" very soon must follow "the final desolation".

This judgment will no doubt be instantly rejected by nearly any American, and a little further on I shall try to show why. Yet time may prove that, in stating it, Maritain has brought into sharp focus the very rock on which our civilization is splitting.

III

Where Maritain regards himself, first of all, as a Christian, the Spanish philosopher, Ortega y Gasset, admits that, since he has already passed through that experience, perhaps he is no longer

one at all. But, he does not make this same denial regarding his attachment to Europe. Despite his exile in France, Holland, and the Argentine, still within him burns some enduring consciousness of inalienably belonging to the particular civilization out of which he has sprung. Maritain, on the other hand, conceives of himself not only as French, but as related by his religion to all men and all continents and nations. This primary variation in outlook will indicate from what differing conceptions the two authors advance on their common task of trying to interpret what is happening now in the world.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY, like every other of Ortega's works, looks both backward and forward. That is, it not only anticipates a more ambitious work to be called *MAN AND PEOPLE*, but it also presupposes more than transient acquaintance with the author's now famous study, *THE REVOLT OF THE MASSES*. In the particular volume now under discussion Ortega explores, in a series of five essays, the various stages by which Europe has come to its present unhappy fate. And since of all political parties he prefers English liberalism, it is not surprising that each of these preparatory papers raises very nearly the same identical questions: Can mass-man be awakened to a personal life? Can any living human hope to avoid that "frightful homogeneity" which seems to be sweeping over the world? The issues raised in these inquiries he regards as by far the most important now facing our time. Rewarding as it would be to review each one of the separate essays, I have space to dwell only on the most comprehensive of the series, "History as System".

In this essay, Ortega contends that vast social changes are brought about more by the pressure of certain fundamental hopes, wishes, wills and beliefs than by any blind drift of economic forces. This argument many an American will read with the sensation of having come, at last, on a familiar track in a desert of learned argument.

"Just so," more than a few will reflect as they study this essay, "just so we used to hear how it was that our people went on when they thought they couldn't, on down the Wilderness Road, and the Spanish Trail, and back from Appomattox."

Since every great turn in history, our own included, thus depends, Ortega insists, on man's beliefs, it is of first importance to

notice that in Europe, as Maritain and others bear witness, "man is tired of stars, nervous reactions and atoms". Therefore, Ortega thinks, the prestige of science is as certain to wane as did the mediaeval church, for it is the nature of man, "the contriver, inventor, and thinker", always to go on to something new. Before long, he expects somebody, somewhere, to hit upon another "new revelation" which once again will set the world off on a new track.

This new conception, he believes, will spring out of a closer study of the past. What was man looking for, he wonders, all those long centuries ago when he was busy raising great gates to great cities over which now the lonely hawk floats? What despairs have always driven him, what hopes, what fears, and what dreams? In asking these questions he is calling, apparently, for many more such attempts at evaluating the historical process as are contained, for example, in Mr. J. B. Bury's *IDEA OF PROGRESS* or in Mr. James H. Breasted's *DAWN OF CONSCIENCE*, or in his own over-all studies.

To read long in any university library, however, is to realize that most contemporary scholars have found it a very great deal easier to assemble aggregates of data than to raise ultimate questions. But now, Ortega insists, they are obliged by the exigencies of their era to attempt some new synthesis of the statistics which they have so long been accumulating like ants—to attempt it or perish.

As to whether the mind of man is actually capable of so stupendous a task, there may be more than one opinion. Still, it is encouraging to know that, just as the Knight of Mantua found 'any road better than any inn', so there is heart in his countryman, Ortega, for venturing along new and untried paths.

IV

Although a native of Illinois, Mr. Donald Culross Peattie has lived abroad, absorbing the temper of Europe. Perhaps this exposure accounts for the fact that now, for a long while, he has felt himself pressed by very nearly the same questions that trouble Maritain and Ortega.

His major purpose in writing *THE ROAD OF A NATURALIST* was to describe one aspect of life in the United States. But more than

the report of any mere physical journey, more even than the biography which slips here and there into its pages, the book presents an account of the mental quest of a scientist after some certainty as to what may be the place of an intellectual in an age apparently given over to force. This inquiry, which has recently tempted minds as diverse as those of Eric Gill and Hans Zinsser, leads Mr. Peattie also to ask himself what things are enduring beyond war, violence, and pain.

His point of view is based on an outlook which includes the scientific achievements of the past century as inseparably wrought into the body of western culture. With this certainty to guide him, he is able to attain somewhat the sympathetic attitude toward our time that is apparent in *WIND, SAND AND STARS*—a sympathy that is not at all like the belligerent acceptance accorded it by revolutionary poets like Spender, for example. To be a scientist in this day and time, Mr. Peattie insists, is to be also “a defender of just such human values as men die for. . . . For the purpose of science is knowledge and every one has a right to know.” With this definition in mind, he has gone out, as a few kings, more prophets, and a very great many saints and poets have done, to take counsel of the desert.

Even though his outlook is in part imaginative and intuitive, yet in this book his style no longer tends to lean toward the lyrical. Into its structure has now passed that knowledge which includes in its orbit all those things which men ordinarily call hard, bitter, or insupportable—death, loss, sorrow, poverty, pain, as well as the sure certainty that, whatever happens to us and our time, “the wind will endure, and sand and snow, and mountains, and cattle, and gold and trees”.

I think I can understand why he lays so much stress on these things, for only recently I myself have spent days listening to the wind singing and wailing across wet sage and yellow huisache and spiny cactus, across wheat fields and cattle ranches and oil fields and mountains standing purple and gold under the sun. It was a sound that I shall never forget; but it is hard to explain to anyone else what one feels in those spaces—the strange, weird sensation of walking on stardust and silence, free in a space and all time.

Nevertheless, Mr. Peattie has been extraordinarily successful

in translating that impression. And in doing so, he has also, I think, made clear in what way this continent has irreparably marked a good many of its citizens. For more than a few Americans have somehow absorbed into their beings that almost terrifying loneliness which drops over unsettled land at dusk, that wild and perilous freedom which geese and mallards and range cattle know. And having tasted of this bitter, and bare, and desolate knowledge, they will never again be satisfied with less. All this—wind and rain and sun and cold and savages and wild animals and dangers incalculable—is therefore, what nearly any American understands by nature; and all this, too, he unconsciously thinks of as hardly separate from, but a part of, himself.

In emphasizing this fact, Mr. Peattie, I think, has revealed the reason why, in this country, there is not likely to be any such reversion from science as there appears to be in Europe. Here nature has come more and more to be regarded as the very structure of man's being, the essence of his life, his total expectation, and science as that which gives him control over both it and his destiny. Therefore, with us science has tended increasingly to take on certain aspects of religion—a religion which, having burst all creeds and boundaries, now threatens, however, to degenerate into a mere materialistic humanitarianism.

Mr. Peattie's understanding of his country is based on some knowledge very much deeper than logarithmic calculations or meditation followed out in a study. Because he has lived long in lonely coves and hollows and on bleak, bare table-lands, he is able to show us in what way science may become a kind of insight, how his concept of what he calls the 'life force' is almost exactly identical with that which Santayana prefers to call 'spirit'. Naturally, therefore, he is as certain as Maritain that there can be no conflict between science and that immutable order which religion presupposes; and he would have no hesitancy in proposing science as that 'new revelation' for which Ortega is looking.

"I bring you no news," Mr. Peattie writes, "only that life is hard. . . but that it is also good"—good for chipmunk, or gentian or man. . . . "Life does not take death for an answer," he insists again and again; and this defiant hope may represent that which

comes very near to supplying the basic, the almost instinctive, belief of the majority of Americans.

V

To read each of these authors so far discussed, and then to study Mr. Santayana's last book is, as it were, successively to lose one support after another out from under one's thinking. For in any work of Santayana's, and particularly in *THE REALM OF SPIRIT*, one is immediately aware of a mentality that has apparently learned to dispense with nearly every one of those various assumptions on which most people depend. "My scepticism," writes this most uncompromising of moderns, "is complete [and] intellectual knowledge is but faith moving in the dark."

Claiming no confidence whatever in anything except material nature, he has, nevertheless, always spoken with a serene authority that attracts even those who are reluctant to acknowledge its almost eerie charm. Thus Mr. Desmond MacCarthy rather apologetically remarks that, in reading Mr. Santayana, he always finds himself "thinking of that Roman emperor who on his deathbed said, 'I suppose I am becoming a god!'" Just so does Santayana's remote, unimpassioned point of view impress very many.

For, to admit its appeal is, in a way, to take yourself out of the familiar world. To follow Santayana is once again to enter that ancient, lusty, and oddly innocent time when gods came down from Olympus to mingle with men; when sailors steered black ships across wine-dark seas "for the very singing and the joy"; when some—"not all", Santayana remarks cautiously—"knew how to live reasonably and sanely", if only for a very brief while, in a world that every Greek poet admitted to be full of "wild will and wild pain". This world, antedating great Rome or any Christian saint, antedating Bacon and Newton and Pasteur and Robert Fulton, is closed, now, to almost all alive; but like some spirit out of time, Santayana inhabits it as a man might his castle.

Born in Spain, reared in Boston and living most of his mature life in England, he illustrates in his point of view that common sharing of a common source of culture which once made it possible for educated men to feel at home in any country of the civilized world. No longer, however, are many prepared to understand a catholicity which, as in his case, rejects every form of dogma, but at the same time embraces in its scope—to choose

almost at random—St. Augustine and St. John of the Cross along with Brahma and Buddha and Lucian and Spinoza and Cervantes and Dickens and Homer. All of this together makes up an approach to life that was once favored by men of Mr. Jefferson's wide interests; but it is so unlike that emphasized by the trend of modern education that many college students find Mr. Santayana's writing hardly less confusing than Chinese music, for example, or some other exotic art.

Furthermore, to all that vast group who have been nurtured on both the terminology of physics and the language of Hemingway. Santayana's facile, allusive mind appears to float about like a feather out of reach. In addition his oft repeated assertion that "experience. . . turns a free spirit away from the world" together with his rather doubtful praise of democracy as 'the least pernicious of governments', has served to alienate some among even his former disciples. In the same way, more than a few of his colleagues have become increasingly irritated by what they regard as his antiquated dependence on logical reasoning, as well as by his consistent refusal to take part in the acrid debate between vitalists and mechanists.

All of these various arguments have been ably presented in a recent issue of the SEWANEE REVIEW by its editor, and I do not propose to review them here. I want, rather, to consider *THE REALM OF SPIRIT* not as an exercise in philosophy proper, but as a guide to any whose task it is to try to interpret life, as they see it, in words, or in some other form of art.

For such as these no undertaking—none at all—is so thorny as the effort to explore that force which, as it stirs in one, *feels* so very much alive, so very light and agile, so almost entirely unlike the descriptions—or denials—of the self as portrayed in modern psychology. This always perplexing and baffling entity is what Mr. Santayana sets out to analyze in his last book; and for that reason this particular work will be especially enlightening to any writer.

That odd, elusive, shifting something which tells us it is daylight or supplies the lines for a sonnet—this Santayana declares is neither mystical or cosmic "since it dwells in human bodies." It is, he says plainly, "*that difference between being awake and asleep. . . that personal and moral focus of life. . . that witness*

of the cosmic dance". It is that which moves in us like joy and like pain when we stand listening to the wind pouring through the sedge-grass on a long and lonely beach, or watch night falling over the desert, or first become aware of some concept that we hope to incorporate in a new body of work.

So perilous an incarnation of spirit in flesh—"this odd flame in man which makes him take an interest in inedible things like art and literature"—may prove to be too singular a gift, however, Santayana warns us, to survive at all. Therefore as involuntary participants in so doubtful, but so magnificent, an experiment he is of the opinion that we ought to dignify this cosmic venture by patiently enduring such distractions as the flesh must necessarily impose on the spirit. And since to recognize these tantalizing necessities—these 'dark powers' Traherne calls them—as actually inevitable is, in a way, to be, in some measure rid of their dominance, Santayana explicitly names a good many of them: fear of change, jealousy, any least striving after power, omniscience, or praise, even formalized religion, philanthropy, and politics. All these various influences he regards as distracting to any who would live, as far as may be, in the spirit; and unlike Ortega, he looks upon even the most meticulous study of man's past as a slippery and deceptive staff on which to lean.

But even supposing that, by some good fortune, one were able to avoid most, or all, of these irritating necessities, there would yet remain the problem, for a writer, at least, of determining from what vantage point one is most clearly able to look out on existence. In other words, does passionate immersion in an epoch or withdrawn contemplation of it, serve best to teach those who would learn?

In this argument Santayana's position is unequivocal. The liberated spirit, he is certain, must time and again seek refuge from the world, somewhere, somehow, but only—and here is where he differs from such mystics as Richard Jeffries or Gerard Manley Hopkins—only that it may return, in due time, refreshed and free of inner conflict and confusion. For the spirit is always taught "by how the world wags"; and to remain too far aloof is inevitably to miss those experiences which, in due time, would provide those 'recollections of things past' which instruct the mind. Spiritual participation in life, therefore, Santayana recommends

to all, a "moral fellowship", but never fusion with any organized groups. For no love of the world is spiritual, he insists, as Aldous Huxley also does in a recent series of essays, until it has become utterly and completely disinterested, pitying, and forgiving.

This doctrine is so rigorous and austere that few can hope or even wish to follow it; but, reflecting on it, one is able to account for the curious emptiness that one feels after reading so much of modern literature. For most moderns are very far indeed from having attained any such inner victory over their own passions, preferences, and predispositions; very few are able to discern that peace which lies hid under every despair.

Nor, it appears, do the majority any longer possess any considerable access to that humor, or wit, or plain common sense which long ago impelled Horace to describe truth as a 'truant boy'. In the same spirit, however, Santayana advises men to live "by the dictates of science", but at the same time, so to speak, to "keep their tongues in their cheeks all the while". In a whimsical way, of course, his general point of view on this matter is also maintained by George Bernard Shaw in *St. Joan* and more mystically both by W. B. Yeats in his poems on Old Ireland and by Lord Tweedsmuir in several of his historical novels. It would be folly, of course, however, to pretend that any such casual and gentle scepticism represents popular opinion in this country or anywhere else in the Western world.

When one considers the style in which *THE REALM OF SPIRIT* is written, one has only to read the first few pages to realize anew how fast American ears are becoming dulled to the cadence of English prose. In this book, as always, Mr. Santayana's language is (as his biographer remarks) 'marmoreal, cadenced and pure', but at the same time it is also sinuous and exquisitely flowing. More and more, as one studies its underlying rhythm, one understands how much any style depends on one's whole personality and outlook, and, above all, on some unteachable balance in the inner ear. Therefore, only those who are blessed, as Mr. Santayana undoubtedly is, with the poet's sixth sense will be able to use prose, not in imitation of poetic metre, but with its own natural sequential rise and fall, its own particular form of harmonious melody. Thus Jeremy Taylor could write in prose that moved the heart as well as the mind; so also, of course, could Sir Thomas

Browne and Edmund Burke and Thoreau, sometimes, and Carlyle, at his best, but very, very few in a time when typewriters seem to have imparted a kind of metallic harshness to so much that passes for literature.

In this book, furthermore, Mr. Santayana almost consistently makes use of a curious elasticity of phrase that is, I think, more than all else, characteristic of his genius. That is, almost all of his sentences are so shaped that they may suggest much or little, according to what each reader may be able to add to them. This ability to reach across barriers to that 'marrow-bone reasoning' so often exalted in Irish poetry, is Santayana's supreme gift. Thus all may share in his thought precisely in the measure that they have been able to draw meaning out of existence. For this reason, he may come, in the end, to enjoy exactly that diffusion in the popular mind which he has said he would prefer to any other fame.

In short, in *THE REALM OF SPIRIT*, Santayana adopts that tragic attitude which, as Professor Gilbert Murray writes of Aeschylus, is "a profound affirmation of the victory of the spirit of man over the alien forces among which he has his being". Therefore, even in the year 1940, he is able to reassert his continued confidence in that wisdom which knows not only how "to count centuries cheap [but how] to renounce the world even while we live in it and love it". This is a difficult and perilous balance of mind, indeed; but even to strive after it is to understand why all good writing has about it some lovely quality of miracle.

VI

No one who has struggled to understand even a little of the significance of this era can have failed to despair at the vanity of any such ambition. Yet those who persist in this endeavor are at times unexpectedly rewarded by coming upon a few scattered books such as those I have been trying to describe in this article.

To read these is to realize how very, very few scholars have even attempted to write of our time as the elder Pliny once wrote of his, as Dante and Goethe and Cicero and Aeschylus and Thucydides managed to write of theirs. More also, one has only to look over the bookstalls to understand that the fault is not all with

the scholars. In fact, more and more does the evidence accumulate to suggest that modern man may be in process of losing that sense of duration which, in slower moving times, once served as a kind of balance wheel to humanity.

It is therefore with a sense of being restored to some very old wisdom that one comes upon the books that I have named here. Their authors, it is plain, have drunk deep out of those fountains which have long served to refresh every race of man upon earth. In them abides the unshaken intent to see under the light of eternity the events of even this present, appalling as it is. Under such perspective, our era begins to lose some of its incoherence; and, as Proust maintained of all experience when interpreted in art, it begins to assume some shadow of that final truth which history will at last set upon it.

True, even under such review, it no less anguishes the heart, this tragic, sorrowful time of ours, when once again men are driven back to those dark caves and shelters out of which they originally sprang. Nevertheless, to study it in this light is to understand that always—in burning Crete or Troy, or London—the best hope of the soul is “to turn and see itself”, as forever and forever it struggles on to take new shape in mutinous flesh. By deliberately pursuing some such conscious awareness, the human spirit announces its own strength; by undertaking, at intervals, some such backward pursuit of itself, the soul is enabled to endure what it must.

And what other, or better, armor has man ever had to hold up against fate?

TWO DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS OF POST-WAR FOREIGN POLICY

BRITAIN AND FRANCE BETWEEN TWO WARS: CONFLICTING STRATEGIES OF PEACE SINCE VERSAILLES, by Arnold Wolfers. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.75.

BRITAIN: A STUDY OF FOREIGN POLICY FROM THE VERSAILLES TREATY TO THE OUTBREAK OF WAR, by E. H. Carr. London and New York: Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.00.

One of the most time-honored clichés employed in criticizing the Peace Treaties of 1919 and the policies of France and Britain

in the subsequent years is the judgment that the French policy of "intransigence" and the British Policy of conciliation or "appeasement" mutually contradicted each other; and that either policy might have worked, provided it had been allowed full rein without interference from the other. It is a great pleasure to find that Professor Arnold Wolfers, in his study of French and British policy after the peace settlement, has gone far deeper into the question. Professor Wolfers, a native of Switzerland and a former Director of the Hochschule für Politik in Berlin, emphasizes the mutual contradictions in French and British policy. But he also recognizes that the French policy of resistance to Germany and the British policy of the Balance of Power were bound to coincide, once the resurgence of German expansionist imperialism became apparent.

Professor Wolfers finds that both French policy and British policy were incapable of realization within the institutional framework which Woodrow Wilson bequeathed to Europe. The essence of the League of Nations system was the settlement of political questions by the application of general principles to each question. The principles might be those of "collective security" or "peaceful change", or a combination of both. But in each case the same principle or set of principles was to be applied universally. And Professor Wolfers makes it plain that the application of sanctions or of revisionism or of a mixture of both in doctrinaire fashion was inherently in conflict with the European system of the time, and with the aims and methods of both British and French policy. This is not, of course, the whole story: the comparative disarmament of England played an important rôle in bringing about the present war; but the League fallacy of assuming that "aggressor" nations would allow themselves to be dealt with one by one must share a large portion of the blame.

French policy from the beginning, and British policy in the long run, dictated the necessity of maintaining one attitude toward Germany and another toward both the smaller defeated powers (Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Turkey) and the Great Powers (Japan and Italy) which, though members of the victorious coalition, were dissatisfied with the peace settlement. It was, at least in part, the League System which rigidly divided the

powers into "revisionist" and "ant-revisionist" camps. Yet it is, as Professor Wolfers points out, a great mistake to describe French policy as a "status quo" policy toward all Europe. France advocated change on the Danube in the form of an economic and political federation. And, as regards the League, "there was no question of maintaining the 'status quo' of the Covenant. Instead, France from the outset made suggestions which were truly revolutionary in the light of European tradition. The idea of providing the League with an international police force recurred in every French proposal from Versailles to the French peace plan of 1936." But under the League system it was virtually impossible to pursue one policy toward one country and a diametrically opposite policy toward another. Those who saw in the Treaty of Lausanne the advantages of "peace by negotiation" did not see that such a policy might be desirable toward a Power of Turkey's size and undesirable toward a Power with the strength, geographical position, and traditions of Germany.

This initial recognition of the realities of European politics saves Professor Wolfers from many pitfalls into which other writers on the subject of international relations have fallen. Instead of adhering to the snap judgment that either opposition or "appeasement" of Italy would have worked during the Ethiopian affair, but that a mixture of the two would not, Professor Wolfers is much more careful:

It has been contended, it is true, that Germany might have been too profoundly impressed by such vigorous action of the League to risk any undertaking which would put her in the position of Italy and make her the next victim of League sanctions. This does not necessarily follow. If the League should prove itself capable of stopping or defeating Italy, it was not certain that it would be possible simultaneously or very shortly afterwards to undertake another vast sanctionist campaign. In any case, Germany would have had ample opportunity to render herself much less susceptible to outside pressure before the League was ready to act a second time. As it was, the diversion caused by League sanctions against Italy was sufficient to give Germany an excellent political opportunity for her *coup* in the Rhineland.

The moral, then, of Professor Wolfers's book seems plain: whereas others have held that the League should have been either

coercive or conciliatory, or a mixture of both, the conclusion to which Professor Wolfers's efforts would seem to point (although he does not make it quite plain) is that the League should have been a revived Concert of Europe, with a system of coercive alliances completely outside it and not associated with it either in principle or procedure. As it was, the French system of alliances made Germany hostile to the League, and the League prevented the French system of alliances from working satisfactorily.

With these conclusions this reviewer is heartily in accord. The only criticisms which he would venture to express are (1) that Professor Wolfers's work is so scholarly, and is so weighted with learned quotations, that it would probably make his book a bit difficult for the "general reader", for whom such a book is very much needed; (2) that so careful is Professor Wolfers to refrain from pressing his judgments on the reader that he at times leaves the impression of a lack of conclusion. The views which seem to be the gist of the book have not been by any means over-emphasized, and at times need to be dug out from the surrounding material.

Professor Carr's book is intended for the general reader, and Professor Carr can certainly not be criticized for failing to draw conclusions from his material. He is the ablest defender of the appeasement policy, and his book is given a semi-official quality by the commendatory preface written by Lord Halifax. For this reason it deserves very careful examination. So clear is Professor Carr's style and so persuasive his argument, that it is often on only second or third reading that one becomes adequately conscious of the stylistic habits of (1) using mutually contradictory arguments and (2) using the same word in two different senses in the course of same argument.

The first contradiction in Professor Carr's work is to be found in his explanation of why some countries pursue conservative and some pursue expansionist foreign policies. He nowhere repeats the naïve "have vs. have-not" classification which justifies any kind of expansion on the grounds that the expander is a "have-not" Power. But he does classify nations into "satisfied" and "dissatisfied". He is not quite sure what constitutes a "satisfied" power. On pages 17-18 he tells us that "the policies of countries which, in virtue of their great possessions, have nothing

to gain and everything to lose by war, will naturally and rightly be more cautious than those of countries which feel that they have, even at worst, little or nothing to lose." Here he seems to come close to the "have vs. have-not" thesis. Britain "has" a great deal, and therefore is conservative. Germany hasn't any great possessions, and therefore seeks more. But on pages 26-27 Professor Carr attributes Britain's conservative policy to her increased vulnerability:

It is not the fault of Britain that she no longer enjoys the lead over the rest of the world which good fortune bestowed on her a century ago. But from the point of view of her foreign policy, the fact that she is absolutely stronger than she was in the nineteenth century is less important than the fact that she is relatively weaker. One important symptom and consequence of this change is that Britain who, in the nineteenth century, was an 'imperialist' and 'expansionist' Power, has become in the twentieth century a 'pacific' and 'satisfied' Power, finding her highest good in the maintenance of the *status quo*, and defending herself against the imperialism and expansionism of others.

The question which Professor Carr fails to answer is absolutely fundamental. For if Germany's expansionist tendencies are due to her lack of possessions, the thing to do is to give her possessions and thereby make her a "have". But if German expansion is the result not of her poverty but of her strength, and will continue so long as her ability to expand continues, then resistance is the only policy for the nations which are menaced. Professor Carr never recognizes this difficulty. On page 159 he refers to "the ingrained pacifism of a satisfied nation", but he doesn't say whether this pacifism is ingrained by reason of great possessions or by reason of vulnerability.

Professor Carr makes a rigid distinction between Great Powers and Small Powers, and refuses to make any important distinctions within each group. At times he seems almost to regard Great Powers as possessors and Small Powers only as potential possessions, whose principal importance consists in being the objects of the conflicting ambitions of the Great Powers. This attitude may be appropriate enough with regard to Ethiopia, but hardly seems particularly apt in the case of Czechoslovakia:

"The experience of the last War proved that a train of smaller Allies is not by itself a decisive advantage" (p. 166). One wonders whether Professor Carr felt the same way after seeing of what value the Czech tanks were to Germany in the breakthrough on the western front.

Professor Carr's faith in the Great Powers led him to a complete misunderstanding of the position of Italy. Unaware of the extent to which Italy had become a satellite of Germany, he apparently felt quite hopeful that Italy would not enter the war against Great Britain, if only she were satisfactorily appeased. Accordingly he over-emphasized the value of keeping Italy neutral during the early months of the war. One can only wonder how he reacted to the defeat of the "Great Power", Italy, by the "Small Power", Greece. In the same way Professor Carr failed to see the extent to which the downfall of Czechoslovakia reduced France to the rank of a second-rate power—a fact which was pointed out by many critics with less information than Professor Carr.

Professor Carr often tends to omit from his narrative facts which tend to modify the strength of his interpretations. The Munich agreement is presented without the slightest reference to the exclusion of Russia. The May Crisis of 1938 is described as the result of "unfounded rumors of a German mobilization", and the reader is told that there is "no reason to doubt his [Hitler's] own statement that this decision [to attack Czechoslovakia] was taken on 28th May." Furthermore, the feeling that Hitler had been restrained by British firmness during the May crisis is regarded as a "story which dealt a further blow at the policy of conciliation", and the reader is informed that the desire to prevent the success of the conciliation policy was "perhaps the motive of those who disseminated it" (p. 170). The reversal in Mr. Chamberlain's policy after the annexation of Bohemia and Moravia is regarded as automatic, and no reference is made to the fact that his *first* speech after the annexation was a re-affirmation of the appeasement policy; that Sir John Simon followed with another speech favoring the continuation of appeasement; and that only after a violent and hostile outburst of public opinion did Chamberlain reverse his policy in the Birmingham speech.

Nowhere is Professor Carr's tendency to represent opinion

different from his own in the most unfavorable light possible more obvious than in his cavalier dismissal of those who believed that though it might have been possible to conciliate the Brüning Government of the German Republic, it was not possible to conciliate Hitler. These people are dismissed as "the few who believed, in defiance of all historical evidence, that democracies are always 'pacific' and autocracies always 'aggressive'" (p. 158). Surely this is emptying the baby out with the bath with a vengeance! Few people have contended that the distinction is that simple. The general view of some of those who did not regard Hitler as capable of being appeased was based on a knowledge of Hitler's own opinions as represented in *MEIN KAMPF*; that of some others on the fact, not that the Nazi Government was a Dictatorship, but that it was a *revolutionary* Dictatorship; and the opinion of still others was based on the view of the Nazi revolution as essentially the organization of the country for war in time of "peace". But while all such people are simultaneously misrepresented and contemptuously dismissed, Professor Carr has the curious tendency to bestow on Mr. Chamberlain the epithet "realist", though grudgingly admitting (p. 167) that Mr. Chamberlain "must share some of the credit for his realism with those extremists of the Right and of the Left who, while sharing the desire of the official Opposition to pursue an intransigent policy towards the 'Fascist Powers', did not share its reluctance to shoulder the full burdens of military preparedness. But Mr. Chamberlain believed that there was another escape from the dilemma. . . ." Having told us that Mr. Chamberlain *believed* in such an escape, Professor Carr goes on to say, ten pages later (p. 177), that neither Lord Halifax nor the Prime Minister had ever failed, as Lord Halifax said, "at any time to be acutely conscious of the difference between belief and hope."

It is characteristic of Professor Carr that he should represent the alternatives in foreign policy as being always two, one very unpleasant and the other the one that he advocates. The reader is presented with the alternative policies of "intransigence" and "conciliation", and never given the slightest suggestion of a third possible alternative to "speak softly and carry a big stick." Yet there is at least some reason to believe that a British policy of icy silence (while building up armaments) might have been more

successful than Mr. Chamberlain's words, which deliberately encouraged Hitler to make larger and larger demands. Sir Eric Phipps's policy, as Ambassador to Berlin, can be distinguished in that respect from both the policy of Sir Nevile Henderson and the policy of Ambassador Dodd. Sir Eric was well aware of the uses that could be made, in diplomacy, of the raised eyebrow.

Professor Carr pours scorn on the Wilsonian League of Nations, his principal indictment being substantially based on the fact that the League failed. But when dealing with Mr. Chamberlain he brings out a Double Standard, suddenly abandons his "realism", and tells us that "there is a common inclination in politics to take the deterministic view that any policy which fails was bound to fail and should, therefore, never have been tried" (p. 177), the implication being presumably that this criterion should not be too lightly applied to Mr. Chamberlain and his policies. Yet one may well feel more justified in taking such an attitude toward Mr. Chamberlain precisely because of the criterion which Professor Carr has applied to Woodrow Wilson's handiwork:

The coercive provisions of the Covenant will work only if human beings are as ready to risk their lives in the defense of another country as they are in defense of their own. This condition is not at present realized. Most Englishmen will risk their lives in defense of Britain and of other countries whose defense is felt to be closely bound up with it. But few of them will risk their lives in defense of any country in the world merely because it happens to be attacked. This fact may be regretted. But a policy which fails to take account of it as a fact is unreal, and will break down in times of stress (pp. 122-123).

In the same fashion one may well wonder why Professor Carr did not apply the same criterion to the policy which he advocated, in some such fashion as this:

The policy of conciliation will work only if human beings are as ready and anxious to cooperate on one side as on the other. This condition is not at present realized. Most English-speaking peoples, and some other democratic peoples, and still other non-democratic peoples, will respond to concessions by making concessions in return. But this is not true of all countries; in particular it is not true of the Great Powers; and in particular among the Great Powers it has seldom been

true of Germany when Germany was strong. This fact may be regretted. But a policy which fails to take account of it as a fact is unreal, and will break down in times of stress.

The most flagrant contradiction in Professor Carr's argument is to be found in his treatment of the events leading up to the immediate outbreak of war. The Russo-German pact is explained by Professor Carr as a consequence of Russian certainty that Britain would go to the defense of Poland:

It was sometimes hinted during the conversations that the cause of Soviet Russia's reluctance was doubt whether Britain really proposed to carry out her obligations to Poland. The reverse would appear to have been the case. The Soviet Government could afford to abstain because it was now convinced that Britain and France, in virtue of their agreements with Poland, would take action which would automatically relieve Russia from fear of a German attack (p. 189)

But when the German attitude toward the same events is under discussion, we are told that "it was clearly expected in Nazi circles that the conclusion of the German-Soviet Pact would suffice to deter Britain and France from the difficult enterprise of coming to the assistance of Poland, and that the way was therefore open for the coercion of Poland." It is indeed difficult to understand how Professor Carr is positive that the Russians were sure that Britain and France would act, and that the Germans were equally sure that Britain and France would not act.

It is in his account of Britain's economic policy that Professor Carr is most satisfactory. Here he is on firm ground, and his chapter on this subject is easily the best brief account available. He divides British policy into four periods. The first (1919-1931) was the period of "moderate tariffs and good resolutions"; the second (1931-1933) was the period of crisis and readjustment, the third (1933-1938) of consolidation of the new position, the fourth (1938-1939) of the development of a war economy. In his brief but effective exposure of the free trade and *laissez-faire* fallacies of British nineteenth century economic presuppositions and of the unfortunate effect which these presuppositions had in preventing early readjustment to the changed conditions of Britain's post-war position, Professor Carr is both lucid and sound. But one may

remember that Mr. Chamberlain's success as Chancellor of the Exchequer did not qualify him as an expert on foreign policy.

Professor Carr's narrative of British foreign policy and his survey of British foreign interests is lucid and, in the main, thorough. But by over-stating the case for appeasement he gives a less convincingly sympathetic account of British foreign policy than does Professor Wolfers, who presents a straightforward and objective analysis. It must also be recognized that, in the light of subsequent events, Professor Wolfers's work has already stood the test of time better than Professor Carr's.

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CULTURAL LIFE IN NASHVILLE

CULTURAL LIFE IN NASHVILLE, ON THE EVE OF THE CIVIL WAR. By F. G. Davenport, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C. Price, \$3.50.

In this little volume of some two hundred pages Professor Davenport has endeavored to form a background for the cultural characteristics the presence of which in Nashville gave origin to the sobriquet, "Athens of the South", sometimes bestowed upon that city.

The author sought his material in the social history of Nashville during the years from 1835 to 1860, giving special emphasis to the ten years immediately preceding the Civil War. This emphasis is accounted for by the fact that while before 1850 cultural development had been slow and hesitating, in the decade that followed that year the city developed "cultural patterns of a high order and made contributions to education, science, and the art of living". But since it is obvious that whatever the patterns that may have assumed shape at this time, their presence implied the creation of the material for their composition. It is to be regretted, therefore, that Mr. Davenport could spare no more than a portion of a chapter to the quarter of a century preceding what he regards as the emergence of a definite culture.

It was during this period that the creative impulses which were to originate effects in the form of culture came to light as moving forces. The author himself points out that "the foundation for the intellectual development" of the 'fifties had been laid in the preceding decades. He finds this foundation in the work of two men, one, Dr. Philip Lindsley, who was probably Tennessee's greatest pre-war educator, and the other the scientist Gerard Troost.

But when Dr. Lindsley came to Nashville in 1824 it was to assume the Presidency of the University of Nashville, which as "Cumberland College" had had an intermittent existence since 1806. Dr. Troost came in 1827 as Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy in the same institution. Now, the existence of this institution, and the fact that Dr. Lindsley declined the Presidency of the College of New Jersey, afterward Princeton University, to become its head, compels us to look beyond both Dr. Lindsley and Dr. Troost for that which was fundamental to the "Cultural patterns" of the 'fifties. The soil they found for their sowing could not have been barren nor altogether untilld, even though it is true that as late as 1840, out of the 249,008 white persons over the age of twenty in the State of Tennessee 58,531 could neither read nor write, and that even in 1860 only two states of the Union ranked lower in illiteracy.

The existence of Nashville as a cultural oasis in the midst of this desert of unlearning can be accounted for only by a consideration of the economic condition of the people of that city. Such a study would reveal the significant fact that in 1850 the 7,626 white people of Nashville owned 2,028 slaves. This fact is significant because it implies the presence of a preponderant number of people of sufficient leisure to make culture possible, and it was among these people that Dr. Lindsley began his work. It was because of the presence of this wealthy and dominant group that Davidson Academy became Cumberland College and, later on, The University of Nashville; a field for the labors of Dr. Lindsley. The value of Professor Davenport's study would have been greatly increased by an adequate consideration of this economic element in the composition of the picture he seeks to present.

The chapters describing the Cultural Life of Nashville during

the 'fifties, which form the major part of the book, are suggestive rather than informative. To his study of Nashville schools and colleges the author has added matter in regard to Religion, Dramatics, Music, and literary interests, but the resulting whole, with the copious footnotes to every page, presents the aspect of a source-book rather than that of a finished product. In its present form the volume strongly resembles the ordinary Ph.D. thesis, which, however, demonstrates that its compiler has done the research work necessary to the production of a work on "Cultural Life in Nashville 1825-1860".

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NEEDED: A NEW BALANCE OF POWER

AGAINST THIS TORRENT, by Edward Mead Earle. Princeton University Press, 1941. \$1.00.

This small volume contains three essays on American foreign policy: the first posing the problem of the United States facing a world at war; the second tracing the main lines of our foreign policy in its historical evolution; and the third attempting to apply traditional principles to the current situation.

The second essay is by far the most important. In this an attempt is made to answer the question of what America's vital interests are, and what underlying factors of power are responsible for the fortunate position which the United States has occupied during its first one hundred and fifty years as an independent state. The Founding Fathers, between 1776 and 1823, elaborated a Grand Strategy which "was predicated upon the enormous advantage accruing to us by reason of geographical position, rightly believed to be the keystone not only of independence but of free political institutions." But "almost from the beginning it was recognized that our security depended not merely upon relative geographical remoteness, but equally upon the European balance of power, the maintenance of the British

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navy, and the existence of a universal concept of international order."

The importance of America's geographical position, the American stake in the maintenance of British naval power, and the American interest in international order have already been amply discussed by scholars, columnists, and the public. Mr. Earle's contribution is his emphasis on the importance to America of the maintenance of the European balance of power: "In other words, the security of the United States is attributable not alone to geographical position or military power. It likewise has been a consequence of the fact that no power or coalition of powers has ever enjoyed unquestioned supremacy on the continent of Europe and in its adjoining seas." The Fathers were aware of the importance to America of keeping Europe divided. Jefferson, the patron saint of twentieth century isolationists, wrote in January 1812, to John Crawford: "We especially ought to pray that the powers of Europe may be so poised and counterpoised among themselves, that their own safety may require the presence of all their forces at home, leaving the other quarters of the globe in undisturbed tranquility." And in January 1814 Jefferson wrote to Thomas Leiper that "Surely none of us wish to see Bonaparte conquer Russia and lay thus at his feet the whole continent of Europe. This done, England would be but a breakfast. . . . No. It cannot be to our interest that all Europe should be reduced to a single monarchy. . . . And were the consequences even to be the longer continuance of our war, I would rather meet them than see the whole force of Europe wielded by a single hand."

Viewed in this perspective it is apparent that both the idealists who thought that America entered the World War in 1917 to make the world safe for democracy and the debunkers who have emphasized British propaganda, the munitions makers, and the bankers as the villains of the piece are wrong. American intervention was for the purpose of keeping Europe divided. Active intervention was necessary in proportion as Great Britain was unable to accomplish the task single-handed. "It was not hypocritical to assert as we did that we wished to make the world safe for democracy, but this motive was certainly incidental. . . . It is utterly fantastic to believe that we were then duped by British propaganda or victimized by a conspiracy of munitions

makers and bankers. We entered the last war primarily to defend our interests as we saw them—because we felt then, as we feel now, that the defeat of Great Britain would involve so serious a threat to our strategic position that we could not run the risk of continued neutrality.”

The question of what should be American policy during the present crisis is the theme of Mr. Earle's third essay. He finds that “there is in the American tradition an acid test to which all arguments concerning neutrality or intervention, war or peace, may be submitted. It is this: Does the proposed course of action contribute in the long run to the security and hence ultimately to the peace of the United States?” To this reviewer this reasoning seems to involve a certain amount of over-simplification. The question seems rather to be this: How much does a course of action contribute to the security of the United States, and is the contribution greater than the price which would have to be paid for it? The question is not one of intervention versus non-intervention, but rather of how much intervention is necessary and how much intervention is desirable in a given set of circumstances.

It is perhaps inevitable that in so short a work there should be over-simplification and omission. Some readers may ask why Mr. Earle omits any mention of the War of 1812, in which the United States fought against Great Britain and aided Napoleon, the enemy of the European balance. Others may regret that Mr. Earle, while emphasizing that Wilson fought in order to maintain the European balance should not have explained the confusion in Wilson's thinking which could have prompted him to refer in public utterances to the “now forever discredited doctrine of the balance of power.” The explanation is, of course, that Wilson was using the phrase not in its classical sense of opposition to the hegemony of any single power on the European continent but in the later and confusing sense (popularized by certain American historians) of two alliances of approximately equal power balanced against each other.

A minor disappointment may also be voiced that Mr. Earle does not confine himself in the first and third essays so rigidly to the strategic point-of-view as he does in the second. Too often he accepts the designation “the totalitarian powers” instead

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of speaking of "Germany and her allies." He refers to the "totalitarian menace" rather than the "German menace." The use of such facile classifications can be temporarily useful in argument, since it is easier to work up emotions over slogans than over concrete realities. But this is a two-edged weapon, and can be used by Mr. Earle's opponents also, as Mrs. Lindbergh's *THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE* and Lawrence Dennis's *THE DYNAMICS OF WAR AND REVOLUTION* have taught us. But Mr. Earle, Mr. Dennis, and Mrs. Lindbergh are all out-of-date, and equally out-of-date in that they classified Russia among "the totalitarian powers," and did not anticipate the situation which now confronts us. Sir Halford Mackinder wrote in 1919 that "the democrat thinks in principles, be they—according to his idiosyncrasy—ideals, prejudices, or economic laws. . . . Democracy refuses to think strategically unless and until compelled to do so for purposes of defense." It might be held that it is time we were compelled to think strategically now. But perhaps, as Stuart Chase has suggested, we will not attain to that high state of "ideological immunity" until Mussolini joins England and "Fascism is fought with the aid of its founder." Mr. Earle has not reached this state yet, nor does he adequately recognize that the fate of university professors and of academic freedom in Germany may not move the American public so much as it moves the American professor. But these minor olemishes are of scant importance in a work which, it may be hoped, is only a first effort to restore to respectability the European balance of power as a major principle of international relations, and to emphasize America's vital interest in its maintenance.

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JOHN DEWEY'S VISION

EDUCATION TODAY. By John Dewey. New York: G. P. Putman's Sons. 1940. 373 plus xiv pages. \$3.75.

It would be difficult to calculate how much society, and especially American society, owes to John Dewey. However one may regard his philosophy, one cannot ignore it; and in his recent treatise on *Logic*, at least, there is the exposition of the method of thought characteristic of all our scientific endeavor in this era. Aside from his philosophy, which must at best interest a limited number of people, John Dewey is and long has been a guide in educational matters, which are of immediate concern to every individual in the country.

We think of him, perhaps, as the father of progressive education; and if we mean by this phrase that he started "progressive education", we are mistaken. If we mean, however, that long years ago John Dewey was more interested in the child than in the superintendent of schools, we are right. He is still more interested in the child than in any one else. This does not mean, however, that he approves the method or lack of method of a lot of schools that call themselves "progressive".

He knows, as well as any one, that a child's personality is not something born in the child, but is a development of the interaction of child and surroundings. Consequently, to let a child run wild so that it may "express its personality" is merely to abandon responsibility. On the other hand, to make individuals conform rigidly to a standard that fits none of them is no less an abandonment of responsibility.

Responsibility is a good deal of Mr. Dewey's thesis. He insists over and over again, in his writings and his talks, that the teachers must be responsible for the conduct of schools. Boards of business men, superintendents who are somewhat removed from the pupils, and all others besides the teachers cannot know as well as the teachers what should be done in any school. The teachers, after all, have to do a good deal of what is done; and they should have the determination of their course. Any other way is not the way of democracy.

Democracy, by the way, is not, to John Dewey, merely an op-

portunity for people to stuff ballots into boxes. It is a way of living together, so that any man may express at any time his desires, his objections, and his needs, as they may occur to him. He may not be able to think very well; he may not be able to accomplish anything worth doing; but he will, in a democracy, have an opportunity to tell what his own troubles are, and what he would like. So in schools: if those who must do the work can co-operate in formulating the plans of the school, the result will probably not be perfect, but it will at least be intelligible to those who worked together to arrange it.

Schools are not places of preparation for life in society: they are life in society. Education is living. Consequently what is true of life in society is true of life in schools and colleges and universities. How little some institutions of learning realize this fact, Mr. Dewey makes clear by implication. How much they might accomplish that they do not now accomplish, he suggests very forcefully.

For it is the schools, from kindergarten to university, that will determine to a great degree our culture. All the quarrels about culture, and cultural as opposed to vocational subjects, are absurd. Culture is not a matter of what language one reads, or even of what one reads. It is a matter of what one does, not only professionally, but in meeting the countless problems of life in society. Those who may profit by class distinction will argue otherwise—but not convincingly to one who reads John Dewey.

In this latest book of Mr. Dewey's, Joseph Ratner has edited forty-five essays, the first of which was published in 1897, and the last in 1938. How consistently, how patiently, and how wisely John Dewey has spoken for more than forty years is a revelation even to those who thought that they knew something of the man. Furthermore, the simple and immediately comprehensible style of these papers will delight those who fear to turn to Mr. Dewey because of his frequent obscurity.

The discussions of education in wartime were written many years ago; but they might have been written yesterday. Those of human dignity are timeless. Likewise the papers which consider the workings of the human intellect are as fresh and as important today as they ever were. A reading of this collection will

show John Dewey not only a leader of thought forty years ago, but a leader in his writings of forty years ago of thought today.

Especially valuable in a time when human beings are being depressed into conforming likenesses of one another; in a time of confusion worse confounded by noise and the babble of words; in a time when mankind may easily slip into barbarism, it is good to read the words of a man who for over forty years as shown in this one volume has insisted upon the virtue of democracy as a way of life, who has insisted upon the dignity of man, and who has never ceased to enlighten those who read him, and to make easier the intellectual way of his compatriots.

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REPETITION AS DEVICE

REPETITION IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS. By Paul V. Kreider. Princeton University Press for the University of Cincinnati, 1941. 306 pp. \$3.50.

Of the making of many books about Shakespeare there is no end. He is still, after three centuries, the most fertile field for the literary critic to cultivate. Fresh approaches to that field are not so common, however. And it is something worthy of note when there appears a book that studies Shakespeare from a new angle.

Professor Paul V. Kreider, in a handsomely printed volume, just issued by the Princeton Press for the University of Cincinnati, and published with the assistance of the Charles Phelps Taft Memorial Fund, achieves the unusual under the title REPETITION IN SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS. With infinite pains he has examined every drama from Shakespeare's pen, together with such doubtful pieces as "Titus Andronicus", "Pericles", "The Two Noble Kinsmen", and the three parts of "Henry VI", to ascertain the amount of repetition employed and its evident artistic purpose. He first considers Shakespeare's use of repetition that is mechanical, indicating not only its frequency, but also its variety and the art with which the dramatist has "concealed from us the extent to

which he did repeat". But Dr. Kreider does not make the mistake of assuming that knowledge of any mere mechanical means will suffice for an understanding of the playwright. Episodes of plot and quirks of character may appear and reappear so persistently as to seem an integral part of the master's technique, but they are shown to be subordinate, after all, to a poetic purpose far more important than any device. It is the poetic feeling and expression that determines the value of the plays and redeems what in their technique might otherwise prove monotonous. How often does Shakespeare employ disguise and confusion of identity! He did so, no doubt, because audiences of his day liked that sort of thing and also because he had a taste for it himself. But he did not stop there. He was interested in such mechanical schemes, less to develop them, than to make them an excuse for poetic expression.

So, too, in presenting, not merely a stock situation like disguise, but also such a stock character as the villain, Shakespeare employed repetition. Thus he remained consistent in exploiting the villain's traits, his motivation, his relationship to confederates, to dupes, and to victims, his means of self-protection and of accomplishing his evil purpose.

In six chapters Dr. Kreider anatomizes some twenty Shakespearian villains, none of them exhibiting any dignity, and most of them exposing their wickedness at once. They are cynical and unfeeling as a rule, untruthful and resolute. Some, like Macbeth and Iachimo, are poetic in expression; some, like Claudius, are a little touched in conscience. The revenge they take for real or fancied injuries is, like that of Iago, out of all proportion to what prompts it, yet they attempt to justify themselves for what they do. Jealousy, envy, ambition, and lust are their principal incitements to action. Differ as they may, they possess common traits, constituting a type well defined. They are vindictive, deceitful, professedly virtuous, yet at heart contemptuous of virtue as mere weakness. They destroy their victims, not directly, but through dupes.

The only fault the reader may find with this section of the book is the author's frequent substitution of the word "rogue" or "roguery" for "villain" or "villainy". He thus induces a slight confusion owing, no doubt, to his endeavor to keep from the

tedious repetition of terms. To him it probably seemed awkward to say "villain" again and again. Accordingly, for variety, he refers to Richard III or Lady Macbeth as "rogues". Surely to do so is to blur an important distinction. The rogue, like Falstaff or Autolycus, is no villain, and the villain is properly no rogue. Your villain is animated always by malice and employs a consistent plan to further his evil doing. Your rogue may be a vagabond, but he is humorous, light-hearted, light-fingered, too nonchalant to be a desperate plotter or a murderer. He comes of a different stock from such cruel malevolent schemers as the villains Edmund, Regan, Goneril, Iachimo, Don John or Iago.

The critic shows how effective esthetically are the persistent references to sight and to eyes in "King Lear" where the spiritual blindness of the King finds counterpart in the physical blindness of Gloucester. The number of references to sight and eyes tallied up by Dr. Kreider constitutes an impressive total. But the devil's advocate might ask if he does not at first a little overstress the matter when he italicizes as sight words and passages such expressions as "You *see* how full of changes his age is", or "And with what poor judgment he hath now cast her off *appears* too grossly", or "I have *perceived* a most faint neglect of late. . . . I will *look* further into it." Of course, the speech of all of us, even of a blind poet like Philip Marston, is rich in such words, used daily a hundred times without any conscious reference to eyes. Very different are the sight words amply employed in the play, as when Lear threatens to pluck out his own "Old fond *eyes*", a remark preparing us esthetically for the actual blinding of Gloucester. There is no need for Dr. Kreider to force the issue with terms like "appear" and "perceive", since so many words and passages occur that really prove his thesis. This section indeed, which has already been printed in the BULLETIN OF THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION, is one of the most discriminating and adroit of the book.

Another interesting section concerns the verbal and other devices by which Shakespeare in "As You Like It" conveys an impression of the out-of-doors, making the setting dominate the story and fuse with it. Perhaps the critic here stretches a point to find out-of-doors atmosphere purposely breathed into the play even in Jaques' picture of the boy "creeping like a snail unwill-

ingly to school", or Rosalind's jesting reproof to Orlando for coming as tardy as a snail. Similes drawn like these from nature are strewn everywhere through our common speech as well as through literature, even when we talk of life indoors or in cities. But nature does indeed prevail as background in "As You Like It", and it is well to have a scholar indicate her artistic use in the play.

A final chapter is given to another aspect of "As You Like It", the "genial literary satire in the Forest of Arden", with Shakespeare now laughing at his own devices, his romantic plot, his rustic setting, the sentimentalism of his lovers, the conventional-ity of his ending here and of the whole pastoral tradition. Shakespeare, says Dr. Kreider, "knew the difference between purposeful reiteration and that which is an inevitable consequence of sterility. His own repetition is always purposeful. He used two kinds of it: the mechanical, by which he saved himself trouble in his purely structural work, and the esthetic, by which he created some of his most remarkable effects."

An Appendix, extending through thirty-six pages, closes the book with a valuable table concerned with the mechanics of repetition rather than its esthetics. This table lists passages from Shakespeare's plays dealing with Backgrounds in Elizabethan Life; Personal Relations; Natural Contingencies; Supernatural Contingencies; Lyrical, Gnostic, and Narrative Passages; Banishment, Bereavement and Grief, Atrocities, Death; Concealed Identity and Disguise; Disruption of Families and Civil War; Lovers; Low or Clownish Characters; and Villains. Here verbal resemblances and attitudes which reveal character rather than situation are purposely omitted, but the list is so detailed and full that every student of Shakespeare will be glad to possess it for ready reference.

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WHERE ANGELS DARED TO TREAD

WHERE ANGELS DARED TO TREAD. By V. F. Calverton. The Bobbs-Merrill Co., New York, 1941; \$3.00; pp. 381.

Time has a mellowing influence on us all. We may hate American civilization in the abstract, we cannot help loving and admiring many of its concrete manifestations. Religion may be a conspiracy on the part of the ruling class to keep the populace ignorant and servile, but its prophets, martyrs, and evangelists cast a strange and powerful spell over us. Seized by a cosmic vision, moved by mystical trances and ecstasies, they seem to share oneness in spirit with God.

Much of this mellowing influence is evident in Calverton's *WHERE ANGELS DARED TO TREAD*, which was completed a few weeks before the author's death. At first sight it appears strange that Calverton should have included a treatment of the religious communities in his interpretative history of the leading utopian and communistic colonies in the United States. Economic determinism is hard to fit into this picture of selfless, impractical, God-intoxicated, sexdenying men and women who came to these shores to embody their beliefs, follow the light of their vision. And yet to a wider understanding it seems fitting that Calverton, a Marxist to the end, should include a survey of these religious communities within the scope of his book. The organic ousts the logical; the human triumphs over economic categories and dialectical principles.

Calverton wisely does not attempt to reduce to simple economic motives the impulses and the visions that ruled these inspired and often fanatical men and women. In spite of himself, he is charmed by their way of life, intrigued by their spiritual drama, their sacrifices and ascetic practices, their renunciation of the materialistic outlook that was predominantly American. They were a negation and at the same time an expression of the pioneering spirit in this country.

This book lays less emphasis on ideological considerations and more on psychological determinants. These religious immigrants were more concerned with religious than with economic issues. Their object in life was not to improve their earthly lot but to

establish the Kingdom of Christ on earth. That Kingdom was not an end in itself; it was only a rehearsal for that Kingdom in Heaven where the elect would enjoy eternal felicity. As Calverton soundly declares: "To expose the contradictions, fallacies, and absurdities of any religion is an easy task. The difficult task is to explain how religion, in the face of such contradictions, fallacies, and absurdities, has managed to survive and retain through the ages the support of countless millions."

Calverton's scientific rationalism was illuminated and changed by a profound perception of the mystery of the human soul, the element of fanatical aspiration and spiritual ideals it harbors, its unaccountable nostalgia for the absolute. Such ideals and aspirations might be and perhaps were mistaken; they certainly received no warrant, no support from material reality; but even if they were no more than a psychological datum they were to that extent real and the sociologist who took account of all the forces impinging on individuals and groups could not leave them out of the picture. There were things between heaven and earth not included in the Marxist philosophy. Besides, Calverton was strongly attracted to a study of the religious temperament. Haunted as he was by the thought of death, the irony of extinction which forever put an end to the vainglorious Faustian dream of perfection and omniscience, he could not help but peer curiously into the recesses of the mystical, God-intoxicated soul. What was there in religion which fortified the will, made renunciation not only possible but desirable, permitted the psyche to commune with God, filled it with certitude and the precious blessing of peace. That is the inevitable recoil of skepticism, that it consumes itself, that it begins to question its own questions, to doubt the validity of doubt. Calverton was torn between the two poles of Freudianism and Marxism, between faith in the power of the material environment to shape the individual and to create a more desirable collectivistic society, and faith in the power of individual conversion. Perhaps his most vivid and sympathetic chapters in *WHERE ANGELS DARED TO TREAD* deal with the vicissitudes of religious communities that labored to establish the principles of primitive Christianity on earth.

Calverton was astonished to discover religious radicals who were individualists in theory but communists in practice. The

majority of religious communists who settled in the United States were compelled by the necessities of communal discipline to work out this dualism in practice. In their interpretation of God's words and in their relation to God they were incorrigible individualists. Once this desire was satisfied, they were in all other respects more than willing to sacrifice everything for the common welfare. These religious colonies exemplified the fact that it was possible, whatever the underlying motive, to build a society based on mutual aid as opposed to ruthless competition, on coöperation and self-sacrifice as contrasted with acquisitive individualism in a profit-centered order. The religious communities had not abandoned the acquisitive instinct; they had sublimated it into a spiritual hunger, subordinating the lust for wealth to the longing for God and salvation. They faced the inexorable universe and the fear of death alone; out of their own selves they created a new way for the soul.

Calverton's sympathetic understanding of these religious communities did not blind him to their inescapable limitations in both economic organization and intellectual outlook. He saw clearly enough that they were interested exclusively in religious idealism, not in economic radicalism. Modern communism is materialistic in its foundations and in its aims, interested more in economic reform than in spiritual release. Hence Calverton was forced to conclude that these religious groups adhered to an "unprogressive" economic outlook, their eyes focused on the next world, not this. "The America we know could never have evolved from such communities as the Labadists, Ephratists, Rappites, or Shakers, representing as they did the segregated and isolated aspirations of sects." Yet, despite their errors and contradictions, they did color much of the social thought of the future.

Less novel and absorbing (because much of this material is already known) is the section devoted to economic utopias, a chronicle of the remarkable experiments in collective living tried by bands of idealists in nineteenth-century America. Here at last are dreamers and reformers who have turned their back on religion, formal or inspired, who do not prepare for a future life but who dwell steadfastly and with undimmed faith in the present, devoting their restless energies to constructing a society fit for the noble potentialities of man. Many of the founders of these

economic utopias migrated to this country from Europe with the conviction that this was the only land "in which angels dared to tread". In this place, where land could be had almost for the asking, they could put foundations beneath their castle of dreams. Calverton tells the story of the Owenites of New Harmony, an heroic failure in utopian planning; the memorable Brook Farm experiment in ideal living; Bronson Alcott's short-lived vegetarian idyll in "Fruitlands". Curiously enough, as Calverton does not fail to point out, the only utopian ventures which achieved any measure of success were those which combined religious with economic compulsions. Whatever may be rationally urged against religion, there can be no doubt, Calverton declares, "that it nerves the hearts of men, and drives them to work with greater ardor and zealotry, to realize the things in which they believe. This ancient combination of body-energy and mental-drive, the latter born of the fanaticism of other-worldly devotion, produces a synthesis of personality fecund with power and passion. Religion always gives man an illusion of power, by making him believe that the world was created for his benefit and is working in his favor. It has always served, despite the unawareness of its votaries, as a power-phenomenon, a substitute for man's own inadequacy."

The book draws to a close with a sympathetic treatment of Oneida, Josiah Warren's Modern Times, Zion City, and Father Divine's Kingdom. The chapter dealing with Father Divine makes exciting reading. *WHERE ANGELS DARED TO TREAD* ends on a note of hope:

"Man can achieve a coöperative commonwealth in our industrial society, but he cannot do it in terms of an agrarian or theocratic utopia. It must be through an industrial democracy which would make democracy whole, include everyone in it without restriction or discrimination as to race, color, or creed."

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URGENT MEANING

ARE WE IMMORTAL? By Winifred Kirkland. New York. The Macmillan Company. 1941. Pp. 43. \$90.

Winifred Kirkland's stirring answer to an age-old question has already reached many readers in the pages of the *ATLANTIC MONTHLY*; the little book will surely win many more. With reverent scholarship and in ringing phrase the book presents an indomitable faith in the Resurrection, resting on its incredible effects on the men who told about it and the story they told, on the course of history and the lives of present-day Christians. At the beginning, Christianity was not a code, it was a Christ, "the good news of a living comrade"; through the ages the great Christians have always lived their immortality. Miss Kirkland's plea, "Let us dare to live as if we were immortal", has urgent meaning in these days when the issues of life and death are being brought home to us all.

F. W. K.

MANN'S NEW EXCURSIONS

THE BELOVED RETURNS: LOTTE IN WEIMAR. Thomas Mann. Translated from the German by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Alfred A. Knopf. New York. 1940.

THE TRANSPOSED HEADS. Thomas Mann. Translated from the German by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Knopf. 1941.

Thomas Mann's fiction of the last three years has interrupted the *JOSEPH* series which has occupied the forefront of his attention since the *MAGIC MOUNTAIN*. He has probably turned aside from the *JOSEPH* theme temporarily because he announced in the invocation to the series that *JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS* was to be his final work. His sense of symmetry presumably makes it essential that he withhold the *JOSEPH* until he has completed various minor works. *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* (it is hard to forgive the publisher the title of the English translation) is a minor work only in comparison with the *MAGIC MOUNTAIN* or the *Joseph*; the *TRANSPOSED HEADS* is in a lighter vein. *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* will be puzzling to the majority of Mann's American readers. They know him primarily as the author of the *MAGIC MOUNTAIN* and *JOSEPH*

AND HIS BROTHERS, and those books are very different from the Lotte. Those readers who know Mann's shorter fiction will have little trouble with the *TRANSPPOSED HEADS*.

I

The basic philosophy in all Mann's books goes something like this. The external world is dual: it contains 'nature' akin to simple matter, and 'spirit' the god-like form-compelling principle. In the center, participating in both, is man. A good man, or a well-adapted man, will recognize his dual nature, which yet is not dual since both aspects of the external world meet in the human being, and will attempt a synthesis. He will try to hold a balance between 'nature' and 'spirit'. He will both act and think, for instance. He won't act without thinking or think without acting. Man gets into difficulties the moment the subtle balance between 'nature' and 'spirit' is upset. It is a philosophy very much like that of George Meredith who gave the simpler terms 'blood' and 'brain' to the two forces in man which must be united if the man is to succeed.

Lotte in Weimar, a study of Goethe, is by no means Mann's only study of the personality of an artist. His stories with artist heroes include *TONIO KROGER*, *ROYAL HIGHNESS*, *DEATH IN VENICE*, and many shorter works. All Mann's artists are in difficulties because they can't achieve that balance which is necessary to the best type of human action. Tonio Kröger and Gustav Aschenbach, types of Mann's earlier artists, fail because they are too much on the 'spirit' side of things; they miss being human because the 'nature' aspect of their dual being is underdeveloped. It was only after a very full analysis of their problems that their creator came to realize what was wrong with them. Actually, their errors can all be summed up by saying that they are bad citizens, inasmuch as their excess of 'spirituality' isolates them from their fellows.

Mann dealt with such problems almost exclusively until 1914. During the first world war he spent his time in an agonized wrestling with social questions. Previously he had held aloof from them. He eventually decided that his early artist type had failed in humanity because of his one-sided development, and that there was something wrong with his art as well. He came to call

the art produced by such over 'spiritualized' persons 'romantic'. Mann discusses the problem in his essay *GOETHE AND TOLSTOI*. There Goethe and Tolstoi are contrasted respectively with Schiller and Dostoevski. The first pair are artists of 'nature'; the second artists of 'spirit'. There are two kinds of art, the products of men who in themselves tend toward the 'nature' or 'spirit' polarities. The art of 'nature' is objective: sound: classical; that of 'spirit' subjective: pathological: romantic. So far Mann follows pretty closely the argument of Schiller's *CONCERNING NAIVE AND SENTIMENTAL POETRY* which served as his starting point. Now he differs with him. Schiller had further contended that 'spirit' longs for 'nature', and in this respect differs from 'nature' which is simple and contented. Mann corrects this view by saying that 'nature' longs for 'spirit' as well. They are content only when they are united. The corollary is that the right kind of art is an art of the middle; and art which is human because it recognizes the dual nature of man, and gives each of its aspects its rightful place. In another essay Mann selects Goethe's *ELECTIVE AFFINITIES* as a work of art which fulfills his ideal.

Having determined upon the right kind of art, Mann proceeded to do his best to produce it. *THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN* and *JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS* are essentially novels of education. In the *MAGIC MOUNTAIN* a young man, Hans Castorp, originally too 'natural' but with an inherited aptitude for the 'spiritual' (the trembling of the head, used again with Lotte, is the external sign of his spiritual sensitivity) is made a whole man by having the 'spiritual' aspect of his being developed until it is in harmony with the 'natural'. In *JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS* we watch the slow education of Joseph, who, like Mann's early artist heroes, is so 'spiritual' that he is not a good citizen.

II

LOTTE IN WEIMAR is an exhaustive analysis of Goethe, the typical artist of 'nature'. We are shown what the various persons whom Goethe has used to further his creative career think of him. Finally we are shown the other side of the creative process when Goethe's own thoughts are presented by interior monologue. We also gather his point of view from his final conversation with Lotte. Goethe is still the artist of 'nature'. He produces his

works as a tree produces leaves; they grow out of him, or, conversely, fail to grow because of the interference of circumstance. Goethe is like nature in his complete indifference to those about him. He uses them and leaves them, and his only excuse is that if they have been the raw material of his art, so has he been himself. If his loves ("it is a kind of dance that I have joined" says Lotte) have perished like moths in the flame, still he is the candle which is all the time being consumed. Goethe exists in Weimar as a kind of elemental force which his worshippers try to propitiate as much as they can. His tolerance in the moral sphere is frightening because it seems so aloof from human considerations. Goethe shows very little of the longing for 'spirit' that we should expect in accordance with the views set forth by Mann in *GOETHE AND TOLSTOI*; he seems essentially the embodiment of the 'naïve' as Schiller saw it. To be sure, he several times regrets the death of Schiller; seems to feel that he was more complete when Schiller was alive. But he wants Schiller back for his own sake, not Schiller's.

The Goethe of *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* surely cannot be intended as a portrait of the ideal artist. After we have spent a little time in his company, we agree with the Chinese saying quoted at the dinner which Goethe gives for Lotte: a great man is a national calamity. There is something horrible about the icy coldness and nihilism at the core of Goethe's personality as it is portrayed by Mann. It is more probable that Mann is trying to show us the 'natural' type of artist, which heretofore he had not studied in a work of art. The 'natural' artist, we find, is even more isolated from society than the 'spiritual', for the latter at least longs to be joined to his fellow men. I had somehow expected to find Mann's Goethe more sympathetic. Mann has now studied artists of all types, and his final word seems to be that as human beings we can take joy from none of them.

The political aspect of the book is difficult. Mann has, for the last twenty years, urged Germany to turn toward the west and the Mediterranean—toward civilization, not toward the east and Russia—symbol of absolutism and barbarism. The Germans are the folk of the middle; they can go either way. This is an explanation of the political portions of the *MAGIC MOUNTAIN*; more precisely of the conflict for Hans' (Germany) soul of Clavdia

Chauchat (Russia) and Settembrini (enlightenment—western Europe). Mann has made his point of view unmistakable clear in many essays. Well, Germany turned east, not west. Goethe in *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* seems, politically speaking, to be in the same position toward the German people as Thomas Mann is today. From Goethe's point of view, in refusing Napoleon Germany refused civilization, and turned to all sorts of Prussian and romantic nationalist nonsense instead. (The fact that Napoleon was a tyrant and conqueror is beside the point apparently; he is not to be equated with Hitler.) The German people then made the same mistake that they have made in our own time. Goethe holds himself from the course on which they had embarked, even as Mann does today. Both Mann and Goethe take this course of action because they are, before everything else, citizens of the world.

From a technical point of view *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* is disappointing. Mann often begins his books in a fashion that would try a saint; here the ascent to the moment of interest is unusually steep. The long third chapter in which Lotte and Dr. Reimer discuss genius and its way of using those around it reminds of Coleridge's dictum that you can't for long imitate the discourse of a dull and garrulous speaker without yourself becoming dull and garrulous. The ideas are interesting, but the shuffling pedantry of Dr. Reimer's personality is nearly intolerable. After the departure of Dr. Reimer, the book picks up noticeably. The interior monologue section is bound to be disappointing to the English reader used to all the subtleties of the stream-of-consciousness method. It lacks the technical virtuosity which we have come to expect in writing of this kind.

III

The *TRANSPPOSED HEADS* is altogether delightful, worthy of rank with *TONIO KROGER* or *DEATH OF VENICE*. It is certainly the most charming of Mann's works. His irony has never been more biting; it has never been more tender. Mann has never shown greater insight into love, nor greater kindness toward humanity. The sustained lightness of tone leaves a singleness of impression perhaps impossible to attain in longer works of fiction. The *TRANSPPOSED HEADS* confirms my impression that the short novel is fast becoming one of the great art forms.

It handles in fable form many of Mann's favorite ideas. Two friends, Nanda and Shridaman, represent respectively 'nature'

and 'spirit'. Their friendship is in itself a restatement of Mann's belief that the two polarities in human nature long for each other. This theme is reinforced by Nanda's speaking up for civilization while Shridaman is the exponent of simplicity. Both friends come to love Sita of the beautiful hips. Their love enables Mann to examine with his most graceful irony that most notable of human fusions of 'nature' and 'spirit', romantic love. Shridaman, the head, espouses Sita, only to have her long most ardently for his friend Nanda, the body. By a miraculous turn of events Sita is able, knowingly, to put the head of her husband on the body of the friend. Owing to the fact that in the human being the head is primary while the body is secondary, the blissful contentment which Sita expects from her husband, now made up of principal features, so to speak, does not materialize. In the changes which take place in the friends once their heads have been transposed, Mann makes clearer than he ever has before his faith that in the human being the head rules. 'Spirit' is conditioned by 'nature', but in the human being 'spirit' is predominate. The *TRANSPOSED HEADS* is, in short, a restatement in parable form of Mann's intransigent faith in the human intellect. It is also a rich and subtle analysis of the psychology of friendship and love.

The transposition of the heads does not solve the problem of the three principal characters. For them, indeed, there seems to be no solution. Their joint issue, Samadhi, product after the transposition of Nanda's new body and Shridaman's head, is a successful fusion of 'nature' and 'spirit'. His body is beautiful as was his mother's, but he has the necessary proportion of 'spirit'. Its presence is indicated, as so often in Mann, by a slight physical defect—here, near-sightedness.

It is little short of wonderful that Mann, who feels the essential tragedy of the present situation more keenly than most, can write such a book as the *TRANSPOSED HEADS*; its very existence renews one's faith in the human spirit. For his own sake he needed to produce such a book, for *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* is in many places bitter. Though Mann is aware of the dangers of exile—bitterness and hate, at moments during *LOTTE IN WEIMAR* his admirers were given the uneasy feeling that he might be succumbing to them. Any such fears have now been proved groundless.

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TRELAWNY

TRELAWNY. By Margaret Armstrong. 379 pp. New York. The Macmillan Company. 1940. \$3.00.

Edward Trelawny, friend of Shelley and Byron and chronicler of their last days, comes to vivid and vigorous life in this admirable biography. "A kind of half-Arab Englishman", as Mary Shelley described him, Trelawny had lived, by his own account, in his first thirty years an almost incredibly romantic career, including cruel parents, pirates and privateers, wild voyages and adventures among East Indian islands, and an Arab marriage to Zela, dearly loved and soon lost. In spite of all that Miss Armstrong can do to make him credible, this young Trelawny seems rather like the swashbuckling hero of one of Hollywood's fantasies. But he comes alive from the moment of his meeting in Pisa with the "tall, thin stripling" who was Shelley. For in the RECOLLECTIONS Trelawny caught the living likenesses not only of the two poets but of himself at his generous, tireless, devoted best. In those magical, fatal months of 1822 until he seized Shelley's heart from the funeral flames of Viareggio, in those last days with Byron in Greece, Trelawny's height of life was reached. The long half-century of his latter years was a lingering anti-climax.

After an overdose of fictionized biography, one is grateful for biography straight, without imaginary conversations. "It is fact, not fiction," says Miss Armstrong—fact, that is, as Trelawny recalled it in his own records, supplemented and sometimes corrected from reliable sources. But one must enter a protest against Miss Armstrong's way of putting in quotations passages from Trelawny's books which she has condensed and simplified; even if the sense is not changed, the words sometimes are. And in attempting to combine and paraphrase his two differing accounts of Byron's deformity, she does oddly alter the sense.

TRELAWNY may not have so wide an appeal as Miss Armstrong's delightful FANNY KEMBLE. But it will introduce many readers to an amazing figure who lives in literature less for his own exploits than as the great friend of two great poets, the author of the immortal RECOLLECTIONS OF SHELLEY AND BYRON.

F. W. K.